

**Cultural pluralism in the new EU member states**  
**The case of public service television in Poland and Slovenia**  
*Dr Magdalena Ratajczak, University of Wroclaw*  
GARNET Working Paper: No 3108  
January 2008

**ABSTRACT**

This paper is focused on the part of the public sphere, where various ethnic, national and language minorities participate – in the sphere of the media. This article draws attention to one aspect of pluralism- namely cultural pluralism, which assumes that the media provide a guarantee of cultural heterodoxy in a given society. This article has three main aims. The first is to draw attention to how cultural pluralism is implemented by the public service broadcasters in two selected countries, both new EU member states - Poland and Slovenia. Moreover, the paper shows how the media in these countries implement the principle of cultural pluralism, particularly in the context of the presence of minorities in the media. The second aim is to examine the extent to which public service broadcasters in these countries create imagined communities. Finally, the third aim is to draw attention to how public broadcasters have adapted to the new situation and how new ethnic groups are recognized by television in Poland and in Slovenia.

Keywords: public service broadcasters, cultural pluralism, ethnic and national minorities, ethnic programmes.

*Address for correspondence:*

Dr Magdalena Ratajczak  
Institute for International Studies  
University of Wroclaw  
Koszarowa 3  
Wroclaw Poland  
magdalena.ratajczak@zkm.uni.wroc.pl  
magdaratajczak@poczta.onet.pl

## **Cultural pluralism in the new EU member states**

### **The case of public service television in Poland and Slovenia**

*(...) members of even the least imaginary nation never know most of their countrymen, never meet them, do not know anything about them, yet they still cultivate an image of community in their minds.*

*(Benedict Anderson, Imagined Community)*

## **Introduction**

In the modern world the creators of this image of community that Benedict Anderson writes about are the media. The media participate in building multi-cultural communities, often imagined ones- both within national borders, as well as beyond these boundaries. Multiculturalism is not anything new but the question of how to conduct an effective media policy that will take multiculturalism into account is. Multiculturalism is a dynamic and diverse concept. In the opinion of Nathan Glazer, we are all multiculturalists now, and the only question is what kind of multiculturalists we will have.

The cultural diversity of Europe has evolved over the centuries. The cultural differences result from different systems of values as well as different political and religious traditions. The idea of multiculturalism is one of the characteristic features of the world today. The media can play an important role in this multicultural sphere. Their pre-ordinate duty is to safeguard democracy, which in many European countries means promoting multiculturalism. Public service broadcasters can also contribute to develop three great challenges of multiculturalism and diversity. The first is to deal with national, ethnic, religious and language minorities. The second challenge is how to respond to foreign cultures and the third relates to minorities with a dissimilar lifestyle.<sup>1</sup>

The study of multiculturalism has focused on the corporate governance of multicultural societies, the protection of civil rights in liberal societies, the relationship between the public

---

<sup>1</sup> The concept of multiculturalism has covered various topics during the last sixty years. Various (sub)disciplines such as sociology, culture theory, political philosophy and others have studied multiculturalism.

and private spheres and the protection of individual freedom.<sup>2</sup> There are various definitions of multiculturalism including those articulated by: Jacobs 2004, Siebers 2004, Kymlicka 1996, 1998, 2003, Jopke 2003, Tiryakian 2003, Van de Vijver 2003, Smolicz 1997 and Szahaj 2004. Various governments often have problems, how to develop a multicultural policy. In this context, it is necessary to take into account the participation of immigrants and minorities in mainstream society, improving their position (social, economic, cultural), establishing equal rights and eliminating discrimination. Different models and policies are recognized in the literature in this domain and in the practical governing: pluralism (the most desirable, and the most difficult to achieve), civic, assimilation and ethnist.<sup>3</sup>

The aim of this paper isn't to present different concepts, disciplines and models of multiculturalism and cultural pluralism. This paper is focused on the part of the public sphere, where various ethnic, national and language minorities participate – in the sphere of the media. This article draws attention to one aspect of pluralism- namely cultural pluralism, which assumes that the media provide a guarantee of cultural heterodoxy in a given society. This article has three main aims. The first is to draw attention as to how cultural pluralism is implemented by the public service broadcasters in two selected countries, both new EU member states - Poland and Slovenia. Moreover, how the media in these countries implement the principle of cultural pluralism, particularly in the context of the presence of minorities in the media. Also, in what way do the public broadcasters give them air time? Has a model of programmes for and about the minorities been established? Are all groups recognized by the public broadcasters in the same way? The second is to examine the extent to which public service broadcasters in these countries create imagined communities. The third is to draw

---

<sup>2</sup> Of course much literature published last years argues many issues of negative impact of multiculturalism or even that multiculturalism is in crisis. Particularly fundamentalist aspects of Islam are attributed a key role in this negative view on the state of the multicultural society in the Netherlands and many other countries. See also: Van de Vijver, F., Schalk-Soekar, S., Arends-Toth, J., Breugelmans, S., Craks in the wall of multiculturalism? A review of attitudinal studies in the Netherlands, in: "International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), Vol.8, no. 1, 2006, p.104-120.

<sup>3</sup> "Pluralist (immigrants should adopt the public values of the host country, such as commitment to democratic ideals, but have guaranteed individual liberties in personal domains and receive state support for establishing activities aimed at maintaining the ethnic culture). Civic (the same as pluralist, but without the financial support for cultural activities aimed at maintaining the ethnic culture). Assimilation (immigrants are expected to give up their own culture and adopt the culture of the dominant group). Ethnist (there is officially enshrined ideology as to who can and should be the citizens of the state, based on ethnically or religiously exclusive terms, while other immigrant groups face more problems to obtain citizenship (...); there is an increase in pressure put on immigrants by the nation state to adopt the values of the main society and to leave less room for expressions of ethnic culture. Van de Vijver, F., Schalk-Soekar, S., Arends-Toth, J., Breugelmans, S., Craks in the wall of multiculturalism? A review of attitudinal studies in the Netherlands, in: "International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), Vol.8, no. 1, 2006, p.106.

attention to how public broadcasters have adapted to the new situation and how the new ethnic groups are recognized by TVP<sup>4</sup> in Poland and RTV<sup>5</sup> in Slovenia.

This paper is divided into three main parts. The first is an overview of the situation of minorities in Slovenia and Poland. The second part of the article presents minority broadcast media and the main elements of the legal and institutional framework they operate in. Finally, this paper considers how the new solutions in these two countries work. The research is based on more than 30 interviews carried out in May 2006, and February, April and May 2007 in Slovenia and in 2006 and January of 2007 in Poland with journalists, editors, researchers, workers of NGO's, the government and ethnic minority leaders. This study is also based on policy documents, reports of governments, NGO's and international organizations, academic literature and content analyses of minority media.

The world is changing, as are all European societies. I agree with Milica Pesic from the Media Diversity Institute, who has written, that "we are all a bunch of minorities"; we should thus try to see the world from the perspective of minorities. "With all our differences we make our societies heterogeneous, colorful, multicultural and diverse. Our differences instead of being a source of disagreement – as has often been the case through history – could be a source of agreement. Again, no matter how different we are, the fact is that despite our differences, we do have a lot in common. We all want to contribute to the society we work and live in. And we all want to be heard and seen. And this is where the media come in."<sup>6</sup>

In this case, the role of the media has also changed. The media take part in creating the new multicultural societies. And the media have become institutions without which the minority ethnic groups aren't able to join public life with the majority of society. They create multicultural societies in the double dimensions. They take on challenges (or at least they should) connected with the new migrations and participate in the process which may be described as the awakening of a new ethnic consciousness among ethnic minorities living in a given territory. It would seem, however, that the media should participate actively in combating inequality, not just in terms of numbers but in terms of cultural and social factors too. As Sławomir Łodziński noted, the ethnic minorities need to receive preferential treatment

---

<sup>4</sup> TVP (Telewizja Polska) Polish Television.

<sup>5</sup> RTV (Radio Televizija Slovenija) Radio Television Slovenia.

<sup>6</sup> Pesic M., Reflecting diversity becomes obligatory. The role of media in reporting diversity, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), *Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów*, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2007, p.150.

in order to create conditions which they need to maintain and develop their identity. This positive discrimination needs to go beyond simply guaranteeing formal equality and protection from discrimination.<sup>7</sup> The promotion of a programme of positive discrimination by the media is a complicated process and one that is very difficult to implement. According to Suzana Čurin-Radović, head of the Section for Cultural Rights of Minorities and Development of Cultural Diversity at the Ministry of Culture Republic of Slovenia, the development of the concept of positive discrimination may operate on different levels: from the mere prohibition of discrimination to the dilemma of whether to establish positive discrimination at the individual or collective levels. Slovenia, for example, guarantees positive discrimination in the area of culture at the collective level for three autochthonous minorities: the Italian, Hungarian and Romany communities.<sup>8</sup>

### **Poland and Slovenia – New in EU**

Poland and Slovenia joined European Union together – at the same time in 2004. But time has brought to the surface economic and cultural differences in some areas.

As Ryszard Kapuściński has commented, Polish society is full of contradictions. The situation is changing for the better, with a visible difference between the generations. Many young people are leaving Poland to go abroad and as Kapuściński has put, Poland is becoming a ‘dispersed nation’ but also favours openness. “Generally Poles have a tendency to feel a certain xenophobia and reserve towards others. First of all we are peasant society. In the Polish countryside, boundary disputes with fractious and litigious neighbours have often proved stronger than any sense of community. Secondly, during the period which was the most formative in terms of establishing a national identity, i.e. the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Poland was not a country. This left a deep scar on Poles’ mentality with no feeling of identification with state, authority and administrative organs. Furthermore when an entity which embodied authority appeared in Poland it was often an invader that came to rob, plunder and confiscate. Finally, in the west the middle class were the conduit of openness. That strata of society did

---

<sup>7</sup> Łodziński, S., *Dyskryminacja czy nierówność. Problemy dyskryminacji osób należących do mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych w Polsce po 1989 roku*, in: Iglicka, K. (red.), *Integracja czy dyskryminacja? Polskie wyzwania i dylematy u progu wielokulturowości*, Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa 2003, p.23.

<sup>8</sup> Čurin-Radović S., *Instruments for the protection of cultural rights*, Ljubljana 2006, p. 21.

not evolve in Poland and its avant-garde were often not ethnic Poles, who were either killed or emigrated as a result of WW2.”<sup>9</sup>

Such contradictions are also not foreign for Slovenes. Although it would appear that its society, because of its size, location and difference in Policy pre-1991, was much more open than that of Poles. On the other hand one can not forget the history of Slovenia in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>. There is a certain paradox here, because at a time when almost 1/3 of Polish society was not comprised of ethnic Poles, the Slovenes were a fairly homogeneous society. To start with, it is worth noting how the ethnic make-up of Slovenia changed between 1953-2002, when the last census was conducted. It is clear that Slovenia is changing into an increasingly culturally diverse country.<sup>10</sup>

Table 1

Ethnic structure of Slovenian society according to the censuses in 1953, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 2002.

	Slovenes	Other ethnic and national groups
1953	97%	3%
1961	96%	4%
1971	94%	6%
1981	91%	9%
1991	88%	12%
2002	83%	17%

Źródło: Etniczna podoba slovenije skozi statistične podatke, w: Komac Miran, Medvešek Mojca, Percepcije slovenske integracijske politike, Ljubljana 2004, s.89-91.

According to the 2002 census, the total population in Slovenia is 1,964,036. 83,06% of the population of Slovenia declared themselves as Slovenian, 1,83% as Serbs, 1,63% Croats, 1,10% as Bosnians (Declaration for Bosnia as a nation was enforced by the Constitution of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1994), 0,41% as Bosnians, 0,32% as Hungarian,

<sup>9</sup> Bereś W., Burnetko K., Skoczylas J., Idę i uśmieciam się do ludzi, rozmowa z Ryszardem Kapuścińskim, „Polityka”, nr 5, 2007, p.34.

<sup>10</sup> See also: [www.uvn.gov.si](http://www.uvn.gov.si).

0,31% as Albanians, 0,20% Macedonian, 0,17% as Romany, 0,14% as Montenegrins and 0,11% as Italian.<sup>11</sup>

In the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the focus of attention is on the Italian and Hungarian communities and special attention is also paid to the Romany community. Italians and Hungarians are recognized as indigenous, and the so-called “new minorities” – namely groups from former Yugoslavia do not have the status of an official minority, and they are recognized as non-indigenous.

Article 64 of the Constitution states:

“The indigenous Italian and Hungarian national communities and their members shall be guaranteed the right to use their national symbols freely and, in order to preserve their national identity, the right to establish organizations and develop economic, cultural, scientific and research activities, as well as activities in the field of public media and publishing. (...) The position of the Italian and Hungarian national communities and the manner in which their rights are exercised in the geographic areas where they live, the obligations of the self-governing local communities for the exercise of these rights, and those rights which the members of these national communities exercise also outside these areas, shall all be regulated by law. The rights of both national communities and their members shall be guaranteed irrespective of the number of members of these communities.”<sup>12</sup>

Article 65 of the Constitution states:

“The status and special rights of the Romany community living in Slovenia shall be regulated by law.”<sup>13</sup>

The Constitution does not recognise the new ethnic groups. The last census illustrated that that it is they who constitute the majority among the ethnic minority groups in Slovenia.

His data is the basis for a change in the law concerning non-indigenous minorities. There is even talk of amending the constitution. The prevailing view is that changes are needed in such laws that may impact on the daily lives in spheres such as access to the media. It is worth

---

<sup>11</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Census of Population, available at <http://www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/si-92.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/91

<sup>13</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/91.

noting, however, that different factors impact on the status of minorities, including political, cultural and historical factors. What makes it difficult to articulate a common stance is the fact that these communities lack cohesion. They are dispersed throughout the country unlike the indigenous groups, who live in particular areas. Although they constitute 17% of the population they do not constitute a force- not only in political terms. It may sound paradoxical in terms of this article but their heterodoxy is a significant problem in their case. These are completely different cultures, customs and traditions with a difficult past in many cases too. In the view of representatives of the new ethnic groups it is wrong to treat them as a whole and to argue that it is in their interest to be jointly represented.<sup>14</sup>

Many researchers of ethnic minorities in Slovenia stress, however, that a legal distinction should be made between indigenous and new ethnic groupings.<sup>15</sup>

Polish society is in a particularly difficult situation, as it must meet the challenges of multiculturalism. Polish society still has a low level of competence in intercultural communication because of its mono-cultural nature. Poles also have a low level of knowledge about national, ethnic, language minorities, which live in Poland. They are able to mention three or four minorities of the between ten or twenty minorities, which live in Poland. Most Poles (about 75%) don't know anyone from an ethnic, national or language minority.<sup>16</sup>

National and ethnic groups make up around 2-3% of the population in Polish society – according to the census from 2002 – 1,3%<sup>17</sup> (the mono-cultural nature of our society is best illustrated by comparing the ethnic make-up of society today with that in Poland during the inter-war period when, according to census data from 1931, anything up to 30-35% of the population were representatives of national minorities).

Article 35 of the Constitution provides:

“The Republic of Poland ensures Polish citizens belonging to national and ethnic minorities the freedom of maintain and develop their own culture. National and ethnic minorities have the right to establish educational and cultural institutions, institutions

---

<sup>14</sup> Based on the interviews in Ljubljana, Capodistria, Lendava in May 2006 and February 2007.

<sup>15</sup> Komac M., Protection of Ethnic Communities in the Republic of Slovenia, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana 1999.

<sup>16</sup> The survey of TNS OBOP (research agency in Poland), available at [www.tns-global.pl](http://www.tns-global.pl).

<sup>17</sup> Statistical Office of the Republic of Poland, Census of Population, available at [www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl).



designed to protect religious identity, as well as to participate in the resolution of matters connected with their cultural identity.”<sup>18</sup>

The Law on national and ethnic minorities and regional languages recognizes:

- nine national minorities: German, Russian, Byelorussian, Lithuanian, Czech, Slovakian, Ukrainian, Jewish, Armenian,
- four ethnic minorities: Roma, Karaims, Lemko and Tatars,
- one language minority – Kashubian.<sup>19</sup>

But Poland is “condemned” to being a multicultural country as a European Union member state. Teaching Poles the ability to communicate with other cultures would not only teach them how to communicate with the national and ethnic groups within Polish society, but also with other cultures, which had not earlier been present in Poland. Examples of such groups are the growing Asian communities in Poland. Most of all, however, knowledge about other cultures, avoiding the use of stereotypical prejudices, mutual contacts and an openness to other societies facilitate a proper inter-cultural dialogue.

### **Imagined communities?**

Minorities have to have access to the media. The media are like a mirror image. You must be able to see your reflection. If a society is varied, then the media should reflect this. Is this the case in Poland and Slovenia? Do public broadcasters take into account the needs of all ethnic groupings? Unfortunately, it is not possible to answer in the affirmative in either case. According to Brankica Petković, from the Peace Institute in Ljubljana, “Despite the regulated status and rights of the Italian and Hungarian national communities, the recent attempts to regulate the status of the Roma community, and the efforts of some governmental bodies, a number of political decisions, systemic measures and actions are still required before the above questions can be answered positively.”<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Official Journal “Dziennik Ustaw” 1997, No 78, item. 483.

<sup>19</sup> The Law on national and ethnic minorities and regional language (6.01. 2005), Official Journal “Dziennik Ustaw” 2005, No 17, item.141.

<sup>20</sup> Petković B., Minorities and media in the Republic of Slovenia, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), *Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów*, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2007, p. 115.

In my opinion, in both countries, the media can be helpful in constructing what Fred Casmir called the third culture or the third sphere. This meeting of two different cultures- in this case the culture of the majority of society and the culture of the given minority (ethnic or national), shapes the third form- a culture or sphere, which is oriented on cooperation that is mutually beneficial and that does not pose a threat to any of the parties. This concept assumes that a meeting of two or more cultures that had existed earlier and that, most importantly the relationship is not dominated by one or the other and that they do not lose or blur their respective identities.<sup>21</sup> It is in this process that the media has a significant role to play and they have a role to facilitate mutual relations.

The creation of this third culture brings benefits both for the majority of society as well as for the minority communities. The answer as to whether Poland has been successful in creating such a third culture- one which acts as a platform for communication between the minority communities and the majority via the media, is probably not yet. Although over the last decade or so certain undertakings have taken place by both sides it is not possible to talk of a full realisation of this task. Also problems exist in creating this third culture has Slovenia, in the context of Roma community and new ethnic groups.

In my opinion, in both countries, Poland and Slovenia, the governments, NGOs, minority organisations and the media have developed examples of best policies and practices which aim to contribute to media integration of minorities: better access of minorities to media, better representation of minorities in the media, and abolition of discriminatory media reporting about minorities.

In Slovenia, as in many other countries, there is need to discuss multiculturalism, which should be integrated in many other systems, for example in the political and social spheres. This process also includes the problem of access minorities to media, also their representation. This is the discussion, which is connected with some aspects of cultural pluralism in the media. In Slovenia the same question as in Poland arises, and that is, who is responsible for the media integration of minorities in Slovenia and what the goals are.

---

<sup>21</sup> Casmir, F., *Third – Cultural Building: A Paradigm Shift for International and Intercultural Communication*. “Communication Research”, 16, London: Sage, 1997, p. 416-424.

At the moment, this is partly the Office for Nationalities, but exclusively for the Italian, Hungarian and the Roma communities, and partly the Ministry of Culture via the department for the cultural activities of the Italian and Hungarian communities, the Roma community, other minority communities and immigrants. In the opinion of Brankica Petković, “It is necessary to change the policy of exclusion into a policy of inclusion and to offer equal access to the media, in particular to public service broadcasting, and to the public resources such as frequencies and budgetary funds based on equal criteria for all the minorities in Slovenia.”<sup>22</sup>

In the Republic of Slovenia there are some acts, which play a significant role for minorities. The most important document is the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, and Self-Governing Ethnic Communities Act, Government Commission for the two National Communities, and these which are crucial for media issues: Public Media Act, Radiotelevision Slovenia Act and the Statute of Radiotelevision Slovenia.

Public service broadcasts of: two national TV programs, three national radio programmes, radio and TV programmes from the regional centres Koper and Maribor, one radio and one TV programme for each of the indigenous Italian and Hungarian national communities, as well as radio and TV programs for the Roma ethnic community, radio and TV programs for Slovene national minorities in the neighbouring states and for Slovene emigrants and migrant workers abroad, International Radio and TV programs, Teletext, Internet and mobile portals. According to the new law on Radiotelevision Slovenia, passed on 12 November 2005, the RTV Slovenia is “a public institution of special cultural and national importance performing a public service in the field of radio and television activities with the intention of fulfilling democratic, social and cultural needs of the citizens of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenians abroad, Slovenian national minorities in Italy, Austria and Hungary, Italian and Hungarian national communities in the Republic of Slovenia”.

One radio and one television programme for Italian and Hungarian national community is produced by RTV Slovenia. The Italian minority has their radio and television stations in Capodistria (Koper). The Hungarian minority produced their programmes in a studio in Lendava (established in 1992, but a new one was built in 2004)<sup>23</sup>.

---

<sup>22</sup> Petković B., op.cit. p. 123.

<sup>23</sup> Hungarian minority got the financial support by Office of National Minorities.

Important institution within the framework of the state radio and television station are the programming boards for the ethnic programmes: the Programming Board for radio and TV programmes for the Italian ethnic community and the Programming Board for radio and TV programmes for the Hungarian ethnic community. Both bodies have a wide range of activities, with some competencies similar to the competencies of elected deputies of the minority in the legislative arm of the government. The programming boards are established by the Board of RTV Slovenia. They have seven members, five of whom are appointed by the self-governing ethnic communities, and two by the Board of RTV Slovenia directly.<sup>24</sup>

TV Koper/Capodistria, a regional station part of the Slovenian public service broadcasting network, was established in 1971, and now produces nine hours of Italian language programmes daily. Radio Capodistria started broadcasting in 1949 and had until 1954 broadcast programmes in three languages: Slovene, Croatian and Italian. From 1954 to 1979 the programme was mainly Italian and in 1979 programmes split on two transmitters. Radio Koper/Capodistria nowadays broadcasts 14 hours of Italian language programme intended for Italian minorities living in Slovenia and Croatia.<sup>25</sup> Nowadays, in the opinion of Antonio Rocco, director of RTV programmes for the Italian Community, “Radio and television Capodistria has managed to create a modern programme with a lot of variety that is well received by our listeners. The whole year through we mostly dedicated our programme to the Italian national community, to internal politics, the activities of Slovenia in the international sphere, to culture and artistic creativity in Slovenia and to a number of cultural, musical and literary events marking the life on the national level and our environment.”<sup>26</sup>

The radio programme in the Hungarian language was established in 1958 as part of the Radio Murska Sobota. They broadcasted just a ten-minute programme on Sunday nights. Today Radio MMR (Muravidcki Magyar Radio) produces 13 hours daily. Programmes in Hungarian are transmitted from a studio in Lendava, from separate units – radio and TV station. In Lendava, journalists inform the participants of the Hungarian national community in their mother tongue with an emphasis on strengthening their identity at foremost among its aims. They are also aware of their role they have in the field of the objective of providing

---

<sup>24</sup> Komac M., Protection of Ethnic Communities in the Republic of Slovenia, Institute for Ethnic Studies, Ljubljana 1999, p. 55.

<sup>25</sup> The results of research conducted by the Institute for Ethnic Studies in 1996 show that the Italian language programme is listened to (regularly or often) by almost 60% of members of the Slovenian majority population and almost 90% of members of the Italian ethnic community.

<sup>26</sup> Based on the interview, February and May 2007, Ljubljana and Capodistria.

information to the majority in the nation about this community. The programme of the Hungarian minority is produced in a studio in Lendava (the part of the Maribor regional RTV SLO studio) and it is broadcast by the national channel of Slovenian Television. The Hungarian minority has four, half an hour long broadcasts a week – from Tuesday till Friday. The most famous project is program called “Mostovi” (“Hidak”/”Bridges”), which started in 1978. It consists of short reports on current topics from Prekmurje – the part of Slovenia, where the Hungarian minority lives. The title of this programme has a meaningful character. This broadcast is building “bridges” between Slovenians and Hungarians in Slovenia on one hand and between Slovenia and Hungary as countries in general.

According to Tania Gosselin, the differences between these two minority media is rooted in their degree of assimilation as well as the status of the language rather than the size of the minority groups.<sup>27</sup> Although it would appear that the Italian and Hungarian minorities are in a good situation when compared to the position of the Roma community and those of the new immigrants, they too have voiced criticism of the state broadcast body in the past, especially on staffing cuts and budgetary restrictions. Antonio Rocco fears that Capodistria Radio and Television, which had hitherto enjoyed a strong position in the region, will soon be reduced to the role of small local stations. The legacy of decades will be lost as the media of the Italian community in Capodistria have a long tradition. “Today we have truly become broadcasters for the Italian language community, therefore we do not use subtitles. We enjoy great popularity in Capodistria with 90% of the local community declaring that they tune in to our media regularly. On the one hand we promote our language and culture and on the other the media foster a sense of community. Please remember that it is also the largest employer in a region where job opportunities are limited.”<sup>28</sup>

A project, which has been eagerly awaited in Slovenia is one to broadcast regular programmes for the Roma community on the public media. This was the reason for the workshops to select Roma candidates for journalists and operators held by RTV in 2007. Media watchers in Slovenia his worthy initiative, albeit one that has come rather late. The duty to implement such measures was placed on public broadcasters by the Media Act amended in 2005. A dozen-odd representatives of the Roma community took part in the project. They practiced the

---

<sup>27</sup> Gosselin T., *Minority Media in Hungary and Slovenia: A comparative assessment*, The Peace Institute, Ljubljana, 2003, p. 18.

<sup>28</sup> Based on the interview, February and May 2007, Ljubljana and Capodistria.

art of radio and TV journalism for 6 months. Radio and TV authorities have not indicated what format the programmes will take and whether the Roma participants of the workshops will prepare programmes or utilise material used in other radio and TV programmes.

As Miha Lamprecht, head of International Relations in RTV and coordinator of the Roma Project noted, that although the participants of the workshops are strongly involved in their task and that many have journalistic experience behind them, “There are still question marks concerning the final formula the programmes are to take. His concerns broadcast slot times or even the language they are to be broadcast in. The Roma population who live in Slovenia use different languages and have different traditions. We certainly do not want to make a ghettoised programme, restricted to recipients limited to the Roma community.”<sup>29</sup>

Unfortunately, however, the Roma are still presented in the media almost always only in connection with problems – journalists use expressions such as ‘Romani issues’ or ‘Romani problems’. The media are not interested in their difficulties unless they turn into a conflict that also threatens to affect the majority population. The media concentrate on particular ‘negative traits’ of the Roma, for example cultural differences, deviation and the apparent threat they pose to the majority population.<sup>30</sup> Petković pointed out that in public debates about the Roma in the media, “handy (racist) arguments imputing a specific (criminalized) cultural pattern and the (innate) social inferiority of the Roma people appear time after time.”<sup>31</sup> Using generalization and stereotyping, Roma people are presented as culturally different (they are lazy and rely on social aid), deviant (stealing is presumably their inherent trait), and as being a threat to our cultural pattern and in turn to the majority population. Roma only rarely appear in the media as individuals. Petković, who analyzed a parliamentary debate about elections of Roma representatives, found that the Roma voice was increasingly present in the media. She noted that this was a “new and positive aspect of the debate about Roma identity in Slovenia”, but she also pointed out that “journalistic practices and discourses that discriminate, criminalize and proclaim the Roma people as second-class citizens in a racially stereotypical way also persist in the expected places.”<sup>32</sup> In the discussion about Roma people in the media

---

<sup>29</sup> Based on the interview, February and May 2007, Ljubljana.

<sup>30</sup> See also Erjavec K., Hrvatinić S., Kelbl B., *We about the Roma. Discriminatory in the media in Slovenia*, Ljubljana, Peace Institute, 2000.

<sup>31</sup> Petković B., Hrvatinić S., Kučić L., Jurančić I., Prpić M., Kuhar R., *Media for Citizens*, Peace Institute, Ljubljana 2006, s. 148.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

we establish often the division “we – they”. They mean negative, different, uncivilized, while we are civilized, cultured.

There are also several radio and television broadcasts for Roma ethnic community in Slovenia, but they are mostly broadcast only by local studios in areas populated by Roma. Local radio stations Murski Val in Murska Sobota and Studio D in Novo Mesto for many years has produced a weekly broadcast called “Romskih 60” and “Korako angle”. Programmes are in the Slovene language, partly also in Romani language. They bring current information from the life and work of the Roma, report on culture, sports and other events, including lots of Roma music and original texts by the Roma. Both Radio programmes ‘Romas' 60’ and ‘Korako angle’ are financed by RS Government Office for National Minorities. Roma are in big part included in the production of the former and a little less in the production of the latter.

There are also regular televisions broadcasts for Roma community in both above mention regional centers – Murska Sobota and Novo Mesto - produced by two local television stations. Most of these radio and television broadcasts are produced by non-Roma staff, except for Murski Val in Murska Sobota. But in all cases executive and editorial decisions with regard to the production and spending of governmental funds within these stations are taken without the participation of the Roma.<sup>33</sup>

The Union of the Roma of Slovenia in 2003 established the Roma Information Centre (ROMIC)<sup>34</sup> - a documentation centre, which combines a library and radio production.<sup>35</sup> Radio Romic at the moment produces and offers programmes (half hour program 'Šunen Le Romen') to eight radio stations in Slovenia (Radio Študent (Ljubljana), Radio Marš (Maribor), Radio Odeon (Črnomelj), Radio Maxi (Ljutomer), Radio Kaos (Ljubljana), local TV Idea (Murska Sobota), local TV Lendava (Lendava)).

---

<sup>33</sup> Žagar M., Komac M., Medešek M., Bešter R., The Aspect of culture in the social inclusion of Ethnic Minorities, ECMI Working Paper, October 2006, available at [ww.ecmi.eu](http://ww.ecmi.eu), p.147-148. Petković B., Minorities and the Media in Slovenia, SEEMO Conference 2006. Programs about Roma and for Roma are produced also by several more ‘open-minded’ radio stations such as Radio Marš (Maribor’s radio Student).

<sup>34</sup> See also: [www.romic.si](http://www.romic.si).

<sup>35</sup> The information centre gathers literature on Roma and literature by Roma authors. The centre strives to supply information for Roma population, as well as majority population. The centre is of great significance for the preservation of Roma values and language. They have their own music production, they organize different cultural events (concerts, literary evenings, ...), they catalogue archive materials on VHS and DVD, preserve and archive photographs.

New ethnic minorities have no programmes of their own, either on public or local TV stations. They have programmes of their own on some local radio stations. Radio programme Podalpski selam on Radio Študent Ljubljana (musical programme), Radio Maribor (Macedonian radio 3M).

The absence of the new ethnic minorities in the media is a big problem. Neither do they have their own programmes, nor do they appear on programmes for the majority of society. According to Admir Baltić, editor of „Bošniak” and Radio Študent journalist the public media have a duty to represent different ethnic groupings, particularly those, which constitute 17% of the population. „We are not present in the media and if one can not find oneself as a member of a given community, one begins to wonder whether such a community exists at all. Because you have no one to identify with.”<sup>36</sup> Recently many suggestions have appeared that a „multicultural” programme should be broadcast addressed to the new minorities and the majority of the population. None of these suggestions have been implemented. My contacts suggest that the idea of such a programme has been accepted but no more than that. Discussion on the details of such a programme has given rise to unease and impatience. Representatives of the new minorities claim that public broadcasters often use arguments that give rise to concern. For example the argument that changes to the constitution are needed in order to make air time available to them. Many experts claim that such changes are not necessary because such matters could be regulated by appropriate legislation. As is often the case, the weightiest arguments are used in order to delay and complicate discussion on the topic. This is regrettable as so much depends on the good will of the broadcast authorities in order to create the conditions needed to co-operate with these communities.

What is clear is that participation in the media market does not depend on the numbers of a given community but on whether they are considered to be indigenous or as ‘new ethnic communities’. Representatives of much smaller Slovene minorities have much greater opportunities, therefore. The aim of this article, however, is not on how to reduce these opportunities in terms of multi-culturalism in Slovenia, but on how to legally include the new communities, which so far are excluded.

I’d like to pay attention also to another problem. The Roma and new ethnic minorities are not

---

<sup>36</sup> Based on research interviews, February and May 2007, Ljubljana.



visible groups, because they are not recognised often in the mainstream media. They rarely get a chance to express their opinions in the media. “Even when topics linked with ethnic minorities are being discussed, central media usually rely upon ‘official’ sources. The consequence of such a journalistic approach is a general lack of access to public discourse, which is an important factor of social power. Reports on ethnic minorities are all too often full of prejudice and stereotypes. It is often focused on the presentation of negative characteristics of individual ethnic communities: violence, drugs, crime, mass immigration, threatening the Slovene national nucleus. Prejudice and stereotypes, which can be found in the media, are a result of personal opinions of individual journalists. Some are not even aware of them, others are not willing to admit them. Training programmes and manuals for the sensitising of journalists on the importance of multiculturalism and on the impact of media discourse, containing prejudice and stereotypes, are necessary.”<sup>37</sup>

At the end of this part of the article I would like to pay attention to the final report of the project “Training and education for combating discrimination in Slovenia”, which was edited in 2006. This report presents the views and opinions of the representatives of ethnic minorities in Slovenia (both recognized and unrecognized minorities in the Slovenian Constitution).<sup>38</sup> All representatives of the minorities agreed that discrimination in Slovenia does exist in various areas, for example related in employment or in the media. In general the unrecognized minorities experience the difficulties in a different way than the constitutionally recognized ones. In their opinion the accessibility to the media in their native language differs for the particular minorities as well. Some have access to daily papers, foreign TV stations, however all constitutionally unrecognized minorities miss special emissions on the public TV Slovenia designed for them. The researches showed that the members of minority groups do not choose the institutional way: either they have no trust in state authorities, or they think that institutions that they trust lack power (like the ombudsman). Moreover they stressed the shortage of financial means necessary for such proceedings, but by far largest is the group of

---

<sup>37</sup> Center for Media Policy with the Peace Institute has prepared (together with Roma Association Romani Union from Murska Sobota) within its programs for the expansion of Roma community access to media, a program of intensive education for Roma radio journalists.). Žagar Mitja, Komac Miran, Medešek Mojca, Bešter Romana, The Aspect of culture in the social inclusion of Ethnic Minorities, ECMI Working Paper, October 2006, available at [ww.ecmi.eu](http://ww.ecmi.eu), p.147-148.

<sup>38</sup> The representatives of ethnic minorities took part in the seminar in Rogaška Slatina on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of May and on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of July in 2006. 27 representatives of following minorities took part in the interviews: 5 representatives of the Serbian minority, 1 of the Montenegro minority, 4 of the Bosnian minority, 1 of the Albanian minority, 2 of Croatian minority, 2 of Macedonian minority, 2 of German minority, 6 of Hungarian minority and 2 of the Roma minority.

those, who due to deficiency of information, knowledge and education are unable to take the first step towards a better tomorrow.<sup>39</sup>

In Poland, Article 21 of the Broadcasting Act contains the requirement that public broadcasters to “take into account the needs of national and ethnic minorities and those of communities, which use a regional language, including the broadcasting of programmes in the languages of national, ethnic minorities and those regional languages.”<sup>40</sup> The right of access to the media was also included in the law on national and ethnic minorities and regional language (Article 35).

TVP (Polish Television) broadcasts on seven channels: TVP1 and TVP2 with national coverage, TVP3 through a network of 12 regional public broadcasters, TV Polonia, which is available on cable or satellite – it broadcasts public service programming for the Polish audience abroad, the fifth channel TVP Kultura (Culture), started broadcasting in May 2005 on cable or satellite and is devoted to the presentation of Polish and Foreign Culture and TVP Sport and TVP Historia (History). The public service broadcaster prepares regular, cyclical and special programmes for and about the ethnic minorities in Poland. These programmes are broadcast on three public channels. The biggest amount of time is devoted to this subject on TVP3.

Since 1995 TVP (Polish TV) has increased the frequency of the programmes it broadcasts on minority-related subjects. Also programmes in the Byelorussian, Ukrainian, Lithuanian and Cassubian languages have appeared. I am stressing the significance of the role of programmes in the language of the ethnic communities because linguistic pluralism is such an important element in inter-cultural communication. Language is one of the aspects of culture and therefore the desire to preserve one’s language, using it along with Polish, is a natural desire on the part of the members of the ethnic communities. The use of one’s own language does not pose a threat to the unity of the nation, according to Jerzy Smolicz and neither does it constitute a threat to the political system or democratic institutions. That is why linguistic

---

<sup>39</sup> Report: “Training and education for combating discrimination in Slovenia”, prepared by Tomaž Klenovšek, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> The Broadcasting Act, Official Journal “Dziennik Ustaw” 2004, No 253, item. 2531.

pluralism falls within the framework of tolerance that we can afford without the threat of destroying the structure of our common values.<sup>41</sup>

The presentation of the problems concerning ethnic groups is meant to serve a number of aims: getting to know the culture of national and ethnic groups which live in Poland, documenting and recording social and cultural aspects from the life of the minority, promoting the traditions and habits of the local minority communities, which are connected with some ethnic groups, in order to get to know their culture, habits and traditions better.

When we speak of programmes for national and ethnic minorities, broadcast on the public service media we talk of two groups of programmes. The first are broadcast in the language of the given group and the second in Polish, but on the subject of national and ethnic minorities. The first category of programmes is covered by certain clauses of the Broadcasting Act, which make provision for the needs of national and ethnic minorities and the broadcasting of programmes in their languages. It is these programmes that are to protect and help maintain the cultural identity of these communities. The second very significant category of programmes is aimed at the majority and is oriented on helping build a civil society and on sensitizing the majority to the needs of the minorities.

Unfortunately, many years after the transformations in Poland, it has not been possible to create a single model of programmes for the minorities in their language either on television or the radio. The creation of such a model would undoubtedly serve to strengthen the position of the public service broadcasters as an institution which supports undertakings aimed at helping to preserve the cultural identity of the national and ethnic minorities and safeguarding their languages. In using the term 'model' what I have in mind is a structure of financing, journalistic structure and a formula for the programmes. This is also lacking with respect to programmes about the minorities, which play an important role in building tolerance and inter-cultural dialogue. It is necessary to establish a framework of co-operation between public broadcasters and representatives of minority communities in Poland. This could incorporate tried and tested solutions, which have worked elsewhere, such as broadcasting programmes in two languages. These kinds of programmes should not just inform about culture but discuss the problems of these communities and be addressed to young people.

---

<sup>41</sup> Smolicz, J., *Współkultury Australii*, Oficyna Naukowa, Warszawa 1999, p.24-25.

They should certainly have a slot on the TV reserved at a regular time in order for viewers to get used to them.<sup>42</sup>

These kinds of motions were also put forward by the Council for the Electronic Media of National and Ethnic Minorities, which was set up on 4 December 2001 in Białystok. It was set up by representatives of national and ethnic minorities who live in Poland. The Council was set up to jointly represent the interests of the ethnic and national minorities in Poland in the sphere of the electronic media and is a platform for co-operation in creating the image of all the ethnic communities in the electronic media.

It is also worth noting the opinion of the representatives of the national and ethnic communities that live in Poland. At the end of 2002 the Programming Team for Media Analysis and Research at Polish TV commissioned the TNS OBOP market research organization to conduct a survey, the main aim of which was to ascertain the assessment of programmes for ethnic minorities on Polish TV. The sample group was selected from representatives of a number of ethnic groups (German, Ukrainian, Slovak, Byelorussian and Cassubian).

Regardless of their particular ethnic grouping those questioned looked at a few significant functions of television programmes. On the one hand they stressed what role the programmes played for them, being something ‘of their own’ and thus providing them with some satisfaction. Older respondents also noted certain sentimental experiences as the programmes exuded an atmosphere which took them back to their youth. Among the younger respondents there appeared an education element since the programmes provided them with an opportunity to learn more about the history and culture of the region. Everyone stressed that the programmes fulfilled an important role in providing information also facilitating “participation in culture”. Using television the viewers were able to take part in cultural

---

<sup>42</sup> In 2004 the National Broadcast Council commissioned research which asked both TV viewers and radio listeners, among other questions, on their needs to watch programmes concerning the problems of ethnic and national minorities living in Poland. 27% of respondents indicated that such programmes should be broadcast with 13.9% indicating that they should be broadcast but not at prime time, 23.5% said they did not care whether such programmes would appear on TV, 19.9% indicating that they should be broadcast but not at prime time and 15.7% felt that such programmes should not be broadcast at all. Despite the declared need to watch these kind of programmes they arouse little interest. But I think that such programmes should not be subject to market research and tests regarding viewing figures. These kinds of programmes never achieved high ratings and ratings should not decide on the to be or not to be of these programmes.

events, and to see their friends and neighbors on the screen. The respondents stressed on a number of occasions that such programmes build and reinforce the identity of the ethnic groups. Thanks to the presence of the ethnic groups in the media and to their positive portrayal the younger generation no longer feels the complexes that were apparent from older respondents. In this context the appeal that the programmes should be addressed to the younger viewers was easier to understand. When the programmes reach Polish viewers they show them that the minorities exist. Knowledge about the minorities, their customs, language, traditions and festivals means that fears of what had hitherto been alien and unknown disappear. It also plays a part on shaping stereotypes and prejudices. That is why many respondents felt that the frequency with which the programmes were broadcast can influence the image of and attitude towards the minorities. The Ukrainians in particular stressed the need to address the programmes to a wider audience, not just their own needs. They felt that one of the most important functions of these programmes should be to show to Poles that there is more that they have in common with Poles than there are differences.

It must be stressed, however, that despite the provisions of the Broadcasting Act mentioned in this article the minorities still have problems with access to the media. At the turn of 2006/7 the national and ethnic minorities had to fight for the survival of their programmes, which were under threat. They finally managed to save them, but their broadcast times changed. Today viewers can watch early on Saturday mornings (on the national channels, on local channels their broadcast times vary). Constant changes in broadcast times are the norm, with early morning or late evening slots being their usual broadcast times.

This is proof of the priority attached to them by the public broadcast authorities. They are becoming niche programmes. It is difficult to establish a viewing audience in such circumstances, while broadcasters can claim that they attract few viewers. An observation of the media marketing Poland leads to the conclusion that a discussion on minority broadcasting is unlikely to take place. It had seemed that this stage of discussion is closed but that would no longer appear to be the case.

Beata Ociepka from Wrocław University claims that this is the public broadcaster's mission. These kinds of programmes have a greater aim and the public broadcaster should air them

instead of just selling air time. It is the public broadcaster's duty to report in a balanced and varied way.<sup>43</sup>

It is worth noting how much time and energy has been invested by representatives of the ethnic minorities in improving the quality of their programmes. This has included the training of journalists, investment in equipment and changes in the content of programmes.

Piotr Tyma, the Chairman of the Union of Ukrainians in Poland and creator of one of the best programmes, „Telenowyny”, claimed that he had thought that he didn't expect that he would have to fight for broadcasting slots yet again. The Ukrainian community is dispersed throughout Poland, which is why it is so important to broadcast the programme on a national channel. “Research concerning the viewing figure of „Telenowyny” indicates that it is watched not only by Polish citizens of Ukrainian descent. Quite often the programme was a forum for not only minority news, but also Polish-Ukrainian debate about history and Ukrainian culture. It promotes significant cultural undertakings, not just those organised by the Ukrainian minority. For Poles „Telenowyny” has also become a source of information about such blank pages in history as that of Ukrainians. A significant amount of air has been devoted to news concerning the cultural activity of the Ukrainian minority as well as their religious and secular customs and festivals. The Polish subtitles removed the language barrier, despite difficulties in reading them. Another important aspect of the programme was the role it played in opening the media to Ukrainian citizens temporarily in Poland for whom it had been the only TV programme accessible in their language. This is why the programme broadcast material on bilateral Polish-Ukrainian issues and the work of consular bodies as well as representatives of culture who had achieved success in Poland. Reporters also tried to show the situation of Poles in the Ukraine, initiatives of other minorities as well as the situation of Ukrainian citizens temporarily in Poland such as students and seasonal workers. A number of times difficult issues such as the detention of Ukrainian citizens without evidence of guilt, the destruction of the dome of the old Greek-Orthodox cathedra in Przemyśl, and acts of vandalism at Lemko cemeteries.<sup>44</sup>

“To be able to live together well, people need to be able to communicate and understand one

---

<sup>43</sup> Ociepka B., Noworoczne zmiany w ramówce, in: [www.wirtualnemedi.pl](http://www.wirtualnemedi.pl) (19.02.2007).

<sup>44</sup> Based on interview with Piotr Tyma, Warsaw January 2007.

another's culture. Communication is the basis of culture and also the basis for any multi-ethnic society to function well. The lack of communication is likely to lead to conflict, violence and social disintegration. This is especially true with regard to cultural differences. Cultural diversity should be respected, but what is most desirable is a flourishing, interactive diversity in which people of different cultures are able to communicate their values, beliefs and traditions to another in an atmosphere of mutual respect and learning. In today's rapidly changing world, driven relentlessly by the so-called information revolution, people run the danger of becoming marginalized if they are not literate and do not have access to modern means of communication. The competitiveness and living standards of whole nations have become much more dependent on access to information and technological know-how. For many minorities, however, communication is really only a one-way process, in which people of the dominant majority in their country attempt to spread the influence of their own culture or people of dominant countries in the world strive to propagate their own cultural values and merchandise their own cultural products. Modern means of communication, which have such tremendous potential to uphold and strengthen cultural diversity, are in fact being used to standardize cultural values, beliefs and lifestyles. This is why the concept of communication must be enriched to include authentic cultural communication – real dialogue among people of differing ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds (McKinley 1997: 11-12).”

## **Conclusion**

To a large extent it is the media which will contribute to the image of imagined communities. Research shows that increased knowledge about minority communities results in a greater willingness to grant these the right to communicate and what follows- the right to be understood. Pluralism of the media and also cultural pluralism form the corner-stone of a democratic society. The Council of Europe, UNESCO or European Union have laid emphasis on a few aspects of diversity, including that public service broadcasters should grant access to representatives of various social and cultural groups, including ethnic and national minorities, and that all citizens should have access to media representing pluralist views guaranteed.

The broadcasting of programmes for these communities is a significant element in shaping freely held opinions, which is an essential attribute of a democratic country. This is the integrating influence of the broadcasting of regional and ethnic programmes. They serve

democracy well if only because the majority can better understand the minority and vice versa. These programmes have a lot to offer to both parties. For the minorities it is an opportunity to maintain their identity, language and culture and for the majority they may be a lesson in tolerance, inter-cultural dialogue and the skill of accepting and coexisting not just next to one another but together. They are also an immense opportunity to aid the long-term process that is the creation of a positive image of the minority in the eyes of the larger part of our society. These programmes should also popularize the concept of compromise and build respect for pluralism and openness.

According Charles Husband minority media play three very important functions. Firstly that's the access to information, so that members of ethnic groups know what their rights are. Secondly – they have access to a broad range of debates and interpretations of the information, so they can convey their opinion. And finally that's the capacity to recognize themselves and their aspirations in the range of representations offered in mainstream media.<sup>45</sup>

Will Kymlicka in particular has drawn attention to the importance of culture in determining the value of citizenship. Citizens, who for ethnic or linguistic reasons, are excluded from the majority culture of a state, do not share the benefits and goods that the majority enjoy (Kymlicka: 1999). People's interests in language go far beyond the single simple interest of communication reach. If minorities linguistically assimilate, on what basic can they claim their own school or cultural institutions? We have also remember, that preserving the language is often necessary to preserve their culture, literature and arts. "So when a language groups fights to preserve its language, it is never just preserving a tool for communication: it is also preserving certain political claims, autonomous institutions, cultural products and practices, and national identities"<sup>46</sup>. In many cases minority groups accept the requirements that they should learn the majority language and they want the right to use their own language in certain spheres or at local levels, such as minority-language schools, bilingual signs, local town councils or minority-language media. So that's why access to the media is so important for different ethnic, national or language groups.

---

<sup>45</sup> Husband Ch. (ed.), *A Richer Vision: The Development of Ethnic Minority Media in Western Democracies*, Unesco-John Libbey, Paris 1994 p.6.

<sup>46</sup> Kymlicka W., Grin F., *Assessing the politics of diversity in transition countries*, in: Daftary F., Grin F. (eds.), *Nation-building, ethnicity and language politics in transitions countries*, Open Society Institute, Budapest 2003, p.10-11.



On the other hand, we have to also remember to ensure all citizens right to communicate, rights including freedom of speech, of the press, of information and assembly. Charles Husband had proposed the necessary modification on the right to communicate by the attachment of the right to be understood. “The right to be understood would place upon all a duty to seek comprehension of the other. The right to be understood qualifies the right to communicate by rejecting and condemning egocentric and ethnocentric routines of engaging with the communicative acts of others.”<sup>47</sup> The right to communicate and to be understood creates elements of multi-ethnic public sphere. The access of national and ethnic groups to the public sphere is being decided about the structure and model of civil society.

In this context it's really necessary, to support the concept of responsible journalism, which should reflect the diversity of societies. According to Milica Pesić, „*inclusive journalism* contributes to the building of the bridges between mainstream and minority communities. It strengthens the minorities' feeling of belonging and strengthens unity, which are two important principals of a stable and open society<sup>48</sup>.” MDI's studies confirm the low media standards and journalistic practices which contribute to intolerance towards minority communities. What is hard to say is why that is and what makes journalists do their job that way. Milica Pesić thinks that the most important aspect is education. MDI experience shows that training at least sensitizes journalists to the issues related to diversity. Helping journalism educators on different levels develop their own Reporting Diversity Curricula is a serious and necessary task in societies with poor diversity awareness. That's a reason why “Reporting Diversity is not just another form of specialized reporting. It is the very essence of responsible journalism in democratic (to be) societies. It is about inclusion, it gives all members of a society a voice, so that responsibility for that society's future is based on joint decisions, not on a decision made by a small group or by one person.”<sup>49</sup> But education about diversity is not only the problem of journalist, but also editors in media, media owners, journalism professors and students, parliamentarians, government officials and NGOs. “By focusing on the most deprived communities, it can contribute both to the education of the members of those communities about their rights and how to lobby for them; as well as

---

<sup>47</sup> Husband Ch., Differentiated citizenship and the multi-ethnic public sphere, “Journal of International Communication”, 5/1998, p.139.

<sup>48</sup> Pesić Milica, op.cit. p.154.

<sup>49</sup> Ibidem.

putting pressure on those responsible for improving the status of those communities and therefore reducing poverty in society in general.”<sup>50</sup>

Both Slovenia and Poland have varied ethnic groups living within their borders. Cultural diversity takes on a double meaning in this context. There is a much sharper distinction between indigenous and so-called new ethnic minorities in Slovenia. Poland’s law on ethnic minorities and regional languages introduced a line of division with which some minorities, such as the Greek minority refused to agree with. The new ethnic minorities in Slovenia have a two pronged problem. Although they make up almost 17% of the population they are not recognised a minority and are not recognised as representatives of particular nations. These communities want to be recognized as Bosnians, Albanians or Serbs. Although they come from the Balkan region they differ in terms of language, culture and religion. Being treated as one whole gives them a depreciated sense of their worth. As Mitja Žagar from the Institute for Ethnic Studies, these communities do not form associations and therefore do not constitute a significant force, including that in the political domain.

He also draws attention to a certain ‘atmosphere’ connected with ethnic communities in Europe, including those in Slovenia. The problem of negative stereotypes, prejudice and intolerance is still very real. The problem of how to promote the notion of multi-culturalism still remains unanswered. The role of the media here is potentially great, albeit not fully realized as yet.

In all certainty co-operation in the field of the media between all ethnic groups is essential. In Poland the ethnic groups have taken a stride forward by forming the Council for the Electronic Media of National and Ethnic Minorities, representing all the constitutionally recognised national and ethnic groups. The Council has managed to articulate a common standpoint for all the ethnic groupings, despite different ideas about the media. I feel a similar institution could also be established in Slovenia. Neither Slovenia nor Poland has managed to create a complete model of programmes for national and ethnic minorities. In the case of Slovenia the two indigenous groups, the Italian and Hungarian minorities are the exception. Polish law guarantees minorities access to the media but its implementation has proved difficult.

---

<sup>50</sup> See also [www.media-diversity.org](http://www.media-diversity.org).

Public broadcasters in both countries are obliged to ensure cultural pluralism. The problems of minorities should be presented more often on programmes for the majority as well as in the so-called 'multi-cultural' sphere where representatives of the minorities also participate. What can be observed both in the case of Slovenia and Poland is insufficient level of participation on the part of minority representatives in the production of such programmes. The appeal made by Milica Pesić in her text on drawing the attention of majority derived journalists to the production of such programmes remains very real. What is needed is an understanding of the problems of minorities and a departure from stereotypical and prejudiced thinking.

In the case of these programmes it is not just viewing figures that should decide whether such programmes remain on the air. They do not have to beat viewing figures and what is important is that the public broadcaster should make a certain group of viewers aware that such programmes are valuable both for the minorities as well as the majority of the population.

The viewer has to become accustomed to such programmes by their promotion and a constant broadcast slot in order that they do not become 'ghettoised'. It may be high time that appeals for greater tolerance and openness should be reflected in the programming policy of public broadcasters.

Beata Klimkiewicz, who compares different forms of accommodating multi-culturalism draws attention to the fact that multi-culturalism as pluralism. In the case of the media and programmes for the minorities has to meet a number of criteria”

„- that they are culturally open (an expression of such openness may be bilingualism but other forms of effective inter-cultural dialogue may do.)

- they promote their own specific culture in a global context (e.g. in the form of satellite television),

- make use of channels of distribution, which complement this (e.g. on-line journal),

- in the case of radio and television they perform the role of a public service, financed from the public purse,

- are not subject to market calculations,

- use public support,

- fulfill other complementary functions such as language teaching, supporting talents.”<sup>51</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Klimkiewicz B., Akomodacja różnorodności kulturowej w sferze mediów: europejskie modele dostępu mniejszości narodowych do mediów, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów, Wrocław 2007, p.93-94.

## References:

- Bereś W., Burnetko K., Skoczylas J., Idę i uśmiecham się do ludzi, rozmowa z Ryszardem Kapuścińskim, „Polityka”, 5/2007.
- Casmir, F., (1993). Third – Cultural Building: A Paradigm Shift for International and Intercultural Communication. “Communication Research”, 16, London: Sage.
- Ćurin-Radović S., (2006). Instruments for the protection of cultural rights, Ljubljana.
- Erjavec K., Hrvatinić S., Kelbl B., (2000). We about the Roma. Discriminatory in the media in Slovenia, Ljubljana: Peace Institute.
- Gosselin T., (2003). Minority Media in Hungary and Slovenia: A comparative assessment, Ljubljana: The Peace Institute.
- <http://www.media-diveristy.org>
- <http://www.romic.si>
- <http://www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/si-92.pdf>
- <http://www.uvn.gov.si>
- Husband Ch. (ed.), (1994). A Richer Vision: The Development of Ethnic Minority Media in Western Democracies, Paris: Unesco-John Libbey.
- Husband Ch., Differentiated citizenship and the multi-ethnic public sphere, “Journal of International Communication”, 5/1998.
- Janda, W., (2002). Doświadczenia polskiej telewizji regionalnej, in: A.Sadowski, T.Skoczek (eds.), Mniejszości narodowe i etniczne w mediach elektronicznych. Modele, wizerunek, oczekiwania. Białystok: Wydawnictwo Libra.
- Klenovšek T., (2006). Report: “Training and education for combating discrimination in Slovenia”.
- Klimkiewicz B., (2007). Akomodacja różnorodności kulturowej w sferze mediów: europejskie modele dostępu mniejszości narodowych do mediów, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.
- Klimkiewicz, B., (2002), „Biuletyn KRRiT”, 1. Available at: [http:// www.krrit.gov.pl](http://www.krrit.gov.pl)
- Klimkiewicz, B., (2003). Mniejszości narodowe w sferze publicznej, reprezentacje, praktyki i regulacje medialne. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego.
- Komac M., (1999). Protection of Ethnic Communities in the Republic of Slovenia, Ljubljana: Institute for Ethnic Studies.
- Komac M., Medvešek M., (2004). Percepcije slovenske integracijske politike, Ljubljana.

Krzysztofek, K., (2002). Autoprezentacja mniejszości etnicznych w mediach elektronicznych, A.Sadowki, T.Skoczek, Mniejszości narodowe i etniczne w mediach elektronicznych. Modele, wizerunek, oczekiwania. Białystok: Wydawnictwo Libra.

Kymlicka W., Grin F., (2003). Assessing the politics of diversity in transition countries, in: Daftary F., Grin F. (eds.), Nation-building, ethnicity and language politics in transitions countries, Budapest: Open Society Institute.

Łodziński, S., (2003). Dyskryminacja czy nierówność. Problemy dyskryminacji osób należących do mniejszości narodowych i etnicznych w Polsce po 1989 roku, in: Iglicka, K. (ed.), Integracja czy dyskryminacja? Polskie wyzwania i dylematy u progu wielokulturowości, Warszawa: Instytut Spraw Publicznych.

Ociepka B., Noworoczne zmiany w ramówce, in: [www.wirtualnemedial.pl](http://www.wirtualnemedial.pl) (19.02.2007).

Ociepka, B., (2003). Dla kogo telewizja? Model publiczny w postkomunistycznej Europie Środkowej. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

Pesić M., (2007). Reflecting diversity becomes obligatory. The role of media in reporting diversity, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

Petković B., (2006). Minorities and the Media in Slovenia, SEEMO Conference.

Petković B., (2007). Minorities and media in the Republic of Slovenia, in: Ratajczak M. (ed.), Multikulturalizm w sferze mediów, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego.

Petković B., Hrvatin S., Kučić L., Jurančić I., Prpić M., Kuhar R., (2006). Media for Citizens, Ljubljana: Peace Institute.

Smolicz, J., (1995). Naród, państwo i mniejszości etniczne z perspektywy europejsko-muzułmańskiej, in: A.Kapciak, L.Korporowicz, A.Tyszka (eds.), Komunikacja międzykulturowa, zbliżenia i impresje. Warszawa: Instytut Kultury.

Smolicz, J., (1999). Współkultury Australii. Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa.

Statement of the Council of Broadcasting on the Implementation of the Framework Convention of Council of Europe in Poland.

Statistical Office of the Republic of Poland, Census of Population, available at [www.stat.gov.pl](http://www.stat.gov.pl).

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Census of Population, available at <http://www.stat.si/popis2002/gradivo/si-92.pdf>.

The Broadcasting Act, Official Journal "Dziennik Ustaw" 2004, No 253, item. 2531.

The Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Official Journal "Dziennik Ustaw" 1997, No 78, item. 483.

The Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 33/91.

The Law on national and ethnic minorities and regional language (6.01. 2005 ), Official Journal "Dziennik Ustaw" 2005, No 17, item.141.

The survey of TNS OBOP (research agency in Poland), available at [www.tns-global.pl](http://www.tns-global.pl).

The survey of TNS OBOP, available at <http://www.tns-global.pl>.

Van de Vijver, F., Schalk-Soekar, S., Arends-Toth, J., Breugelmans, S., Craks in the wall of multiculturalism? A review of attitudinal studies in the Netherlands, in: "International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS), Vol.8, no. 1, 2006.

Žagar M., Komac M., Medešek M., Bešter R., (2006). The Aspect of culture in the social inclusion of Ethnic Minorities, ECMI Working Paper, available at [ww.ecmi.eu](http://www.ecmi.eu).

### **Interviews:**

Baluh Stane, head of National Office for Minorities, Ljubljana February 2007.

Barbarić Peter, head of Radio Student, Ljubljana February 2007.

Rocco Antonio, general head of Italian section RTV, Ljubljana February and May 2007.

Apollonio Robert, head of the Italian TV Capodistria, Ljubljana February 2007.

Žagar Mitja, Institute for International Studies, University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana February 2007.

Baltić Admir, „Bošniak”, Ljubljana February 2007.

Lamprecht Miha, head of International Relations, Ljubljana February and May 2007.

Iztok Jurnačić, head of Union of Slovenian Journalists, Ljubljana February 2007.

Neva Nahtigal, advisor and analyst of Union of Slovenian Journalists, Ljubljana February and May 2007.

Ćurin-Radović Suzana, head of Section for cultural rights of minorities and development of cultural diversity, Ministry of Culture, Ljubljana February 2007.

Tyma Piotr, Chairman of the Union of Ukrainians in Poland, Warsaw January 2007.