

VII CONCLUSION

The summer holiday season in Serbia has been typically used to push through some unpopular solutions “under the radar”, when the public’s attention is at its lowest. One of the most drastic examples was the adoption of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Public Information from 2009. It seems, however, that the public is now more prepared, in such circumstances, to resist media-related changes that could endanger human rights and particularly freedom of expression. The public discussion launched by the Ministry of Culture, Media and Information Society about the Draft Rulebook on Technical Requirements for Equipment and Program Support for Lawful Interception of Electronic Communications and Electronic Communications Data Retention, which could potentially compromise the right to protection of journalists’ sources, was even prolonged as we conclude this Report and certain media associations took the opportunity to voice their remarks. The public debate on the Media Strategy was prolonged too and Minister Markovic announced that the text would be finalized no later than by the beginning of September. The concern remains, however, the unwillingness or incapacity of the Ministry to clearly define and defend its stands. When we thought that the Ministry, by adopting the Strategy and releasing it for public discussion, had finally revealed its positions, it suddenly and inexplicably has distanced itself from the process. It was so pronounced that Minister Markovic even said the Draft was not the Ministry’s, but of the representatives of media associations. Markovic, however, failed to explain at least two things. First, if it’s not the Ministry’s Draft but that of the representatives of media associations, why did the Ministry release it for public discussion in the first place? Secondly, and even more important, if the Draft does not reflect the authentic intentions and plans of the Ministry in the media sphere, what are the authentic intentions and plans and when will we finally get to know about them? If the public doesn’t even know the positions of the Ministry as to the „finalization of the text“, then reasons for concern are many.