

## **VI THE PRIVATIZATION PROCESS**

Apart from the already known problems with the delay in the adoption of media laws, which indirectly affect the privatization of the remaining public media and jeopardize their privatization within the deadlines provided for by the Media Strategy, one instance of privatization continued in July. Namely, the City Council of Smederevo passed a decision to continue with the privatization of JP TV Smederevo, which commenced in 2010. That local station was founded almost 20 years ago by the local government and is one of the remaining unprivatized media in Serbia. The decision by the city also envisages cutting the number of staff from 49 to 34. TV Smederevo is a 24/7 broadcaster with a very little share of own production, mainly consisting of reruns. Since 2003, when the Broadcasting Law provided for mandatory privatization of electronic media in public ownership, this process had its ups and downs. In addition to a lack of political will to finish the privatization, the investors were further turned off by the decline of the value of the media market and the advertising market since 2008, when the economic downturn started. This is evident on the example of that local station, which started back in 2010 the privatization procedure, but is yet to complete it. However, that doesn't prove that privatization is inherently bad, but rather that it is necessary to continuously look for successful privatization models which will not lead to the closure of media and that will enable the media to compete on a completely transparent basis, while fully adhering to competition rules.