

**The Press Council in BiH**

**organized**

**the discussion - Focus Group “Financing Media from Public Budgets”**

**as part of the project “Media and Public Credibility”**

**May 15, 2018**

**Bosnia Hotel, Sarajevo**

The Press Council in BiH organized the discussion - Focus Group “Financing Media from Public Budgets” as part of the project “Media and Public Credibility” that took place on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 in the Bosnia Hotel, Sarajevo.

**The goal of the Focus Group is to make recommendations as to the potential solutions to the problems stemming from the insufficient transparency of media financing from public budgets.**

**The discussion was attended by editors, journalists, representatives of government institutions and the academic community.**

Regulating transparency of media ownership and financing are the requirements standing before the media industry and BiH governments for some years and are an essential part of the requirements for BiH in several Progress Reports on the road to EU integrations. Also, establishment of a global system of information exchange on ownership over companies presents a contribution to world efforts to prevent corruption and money laundering, and that is why democratic systems of government are developing their own mechanisms for transparency and monitoring in this area.

The regulatory and legislative framework for media ownership in BiH is not developed, there is no mechanism for preventing concentration of media ownership, transparency of indirect ownership over media is utterly questionable, while templates for media financing from public budgets enable arbitrary decisions and abuse.

In November 2017, the report on transparency of media ownership and media financing was presented, with an overview of current regulative in the world and our Region, also including a suggestion for substantial recommendations for advancing the legal framework and policies in BiH. The mentioned analysis and recommendations (which we are sending with this call) are the basis for expert, open and focused discussion within the professional media community and decision makers, with the goal of developing a draft of the legislation on transparency of media ownership and media financing.

*The Focus Group is realized within the project “Media and Public Credibility”, implemented by the Consortium of four organizations in BiH, with support of the EU Delegation in BiH: The Press Council in BiH, Media Center, JaBiHuEU and the BH Journalists Association. The Project “Media and Credibility” aims at preparing the legislative framework for the regulation of transparency of media ownership, media financing and advertising in BiH. These areas are of special importance for the freedom of research, journalists’ protecting and preventing pressure against media and the journalists, motivated by political and financial grounds. Concurrently, the project follows EU standards for transparency of media ownership and media pluralism, as well as for protecting the value of the media profession and credibility before the public.*