

Statistical Presentation of the Analysis of REM Council Election Process

<i>Authorized proposer according to the Law</i>	<i>Number of individual proposers</i>	<i>Number of candidates for REM Council members</i>	<i>Number of individual proposers who do not meet the legal criteria</i>	<i>Number of candidates who do not meet the legal criteria</i>	<i>Procedural irregularities or pressures on proposers (YES/NO)</i>
I <u>Independent Institutions</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>YES</u>
II <u>Accredited Universities</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>YES</u>
III <u>Electronic Media</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>YES</u>
IV <u>Associations of Journalists</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>YES</u>
V <u>Film and Music Industry</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>YES</u>
VI <u>Freedom of Expression CSOs</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>YES</u>
VII <u>Child Rights CSOs</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>YES</u>
VIII <u>National Councils</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>YES</u>
IX <u>Religious Communities</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>YES</u>
Total	121	34	32	17	Summary

A member of the Council may only be a person who has a positive public reputation and who has, through their work and activities, advocated for freedom of expression, the free flow of information, the realization of human rights, the development of civil society, the advancement of democracy, and respect for constitutionality and legality.

The Law on Electronic Media, Article 10

Analysis of REM Council Election Process

Updated on January 14, 2025

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Summary of the Analysis of REM Council Election Process

The REM Council election process is severely undermined by widespread procedural and eligibility issues. While certain areas demonstrate adherence to legal standards, systemic irregularities across most groups highlight the lack of political will to elect an independent REM Council. It is important to emphasize that at the beginning of this process, a new Statute of REM was adopted by the Committee on Culture and Information, containing deeply problematic provisions that classify almost the entire work of this institution as a business secret.

The REM Council election process has reached a critical stage as of January 14th, 2024. The Culture and Information Committee concluded its session on December 30th, not addressing any issues; proposals to resolve conflicts of interest, ineligible candidates, and procedural concerns were rejected by the ruling parties during voting. Objections from proposers and motions from opposition MPs were also dismissed, leaving all issues unresolved. Meetings with proposers and candidate interviews are yet to take place, and the final parliamentary session for electing Council members is unofficially announced for the end of January. Immediate action to adopt recommendations and ensure compliance with the law is essential to safeguard the integrity and independence of the REM Council, a cornerstone for media regulation and democratic accountability.

Legitimacy of Candidates and Proposers:

Out of 34 candidates, 17 fail to meet the legal criteria for eligibility.

Out of 121 proposers, 32 do not meet legal requirements, undermining the credibility of the process.

One of the proposer groups - the Associations of Electronic Media Publishers in the Republic of Serbia - lack legitimate candidates, necessitating a restart of the process in this domain.

Procedural Irregularities:

Systematic failures in verifying proposer eligibility.

Unequal scrutiny of candidates, with some being required to submit additional documentation while others were not.

Allegations of government interference in the nomination processes, with significant pressures reported in 8 out of 9 areas, particularly visible with the Independent Institutions, Accredited Universities, Associations of Film, Scene, and Drama Artists and Associations of Composers, and Associations of Journalists.

The Ministry of Information and Telecommunications issued a legal interpretation on the final day of the application period, December 16, 2024, suggesting that prior members of the REM Council may be eligible for re-election. However, this interpretation is both legally unfounded, as it misrepresents the provisions of the Law, and procedurally flawed, as it was issued too late for practical use, trying to benefit only candidates promoted through political pressure.

Strengths in Certain Areas

In the proposers' groups of Associations of Citizens dealing with Freedom of Expression and Associations of Citizens dealing with Child Rights, despite political pressures, there are sufficient legitimate proposers to nominate two legitimate candidates per area for parliamentary voting. Procedures and practice from the area of freedom of expression demonstrate adherence to legal and professional standards, offering a framework for best practices in future elections.

The additional 4 groups of proposers: Independent Institutions, Accredited Universities, Associations of Film, Scene, and Drama Artists and Associations of Composers and Associations of Journalists, despite challenges, still include legitimate proposers and candidates. If there is political will, a truly independent REM could be selected from these nominations.

Challenges Across Areas

Procedural shortcomings, political pressures, illegitimate proposers and illegitimate candidates dominate most areas, severely impacting the transparency and fairness of the process.

Recommendations

1. Exclude Illegitimate Candidates and Proposers

The Committee on Culture and Information should exclude all illegitimate candidates and proposers from the process to restore credibility. If not excluded officially, it is a legal duty of the Committee to ensure that legitimate candidates are sent to the Assembly in all areas, while in the one area without legitimate candidates, the process must be restarted.

2. Ensure Parliamentary Accountability

Even if the Committee on Culture and Information does not exclude illegitimate candidates, the Assembly must prioritize voting only for legitimate candidates and refrains from supporting any ineligible candidates. During the voting phase, the Assembly should explicitly avoid electing any of the 17 ineligible candidates from the list of 34 total candidates.

3. Restart Flawed Processes

Reopen the nomination process for the Associations of Electronic Media Publishers in the Republic of Serbia, as no legitimate candidates currently exist.

Additional Recommendations for Future Processes:

For any future election processes, ensure enhanced verification, greater transparency, and strict adherence to the legal framework to prevent procedural and eligibility-related issues.

Current Overview of Phases of the REM Election Process

1. Call for Applications

The Culture and Information Committee announced the public call for nominations on November 25th, 2023, although this decision should have been made by the legal deadline of August 4th, 2023. It is important to emphasize that at the same session, a new Statute of REM was adopted, containing deeply problematic provisions that classify almost the entire work of this institution as a business secret.

2. Open Application Period

The public call for nominations remained open until December 16th, 2023, allowing candidates to submit their proposals.

3. Deadline for Supplementing Candidacies

The period for submitting additional documentation and clarifications for candidates closed on December 27th, 2023. This phase was critical for addressing identified shortcomings in the nominations.

4. Committee Meeting

The Culture and Information Committee held its session on December 30th, 2023. During this meeting, the ruling parties rejected all proposals to address the concerns stated in this analysis, including objections raised by proposers and motions submitted by opposition MPs. Despite clear evidence of procedural irregularities and violations of legal standards, no corrective measures were adopted, further undermining the transparency and credibility of the process.

5. Meetings with Proposers (*Not Yet Held*):

Sessions with candidate proposers, intended to address cases where more than two candidates were proposed by a single group, have yet to occur on January 20, 2025.

6. Interviews with Candidates (*Not Yet Held*):

The Committee has yet to conduct interviews with candidates to assess their nominations and qualifications.

7. Parliamentary Session for Final Decision (*Planned*):

The final selection of REM Council members is expected to take place during a Parliamentary session announced for the end of January 2024, provided all prior phases are completed.

Analysis of the Proposers Groups

I Proposer Group: Independent Institutions

Summary

The proposer group, consisting of the Ombudsman, Commissioner for Equality, and Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, plays a pivotal role in nominating candidates for the REM Council. While the Commissioner for Equality maintains independence and transparency, the Ombudsman and Commissioner for Information have faced criticism for yielding to state influence, impacting the integrity of their nominations.

Two candidates, Saša Mirković and Gordana Predić, are highlighted as strong and independent, meeting legal and professional criteria. However, the nominations of Stevica Smederevac and Žarko Simović—both long-time employees of REM—should be disqualified due to conflicts of interest and their alignment with state interests. The irregular substitution of Žarko Ristić with Žarko Simović further undermines procedural integrity.

To ensure transparency and credibility, ineligible candidates must be removed, and the group must prioritize independent and qualified nominees.

1. Proposer Group

This group of proposers holds a key role in nominating candidates for the REM Council, as mandated by the Law on Electronic Media. Their nominations are crucial to ensuring independence, professionalism, and legal compliance of the Council. Each proposer is tasked with upholding transparency and procedural integrity while adhering to eligibility criteria defined under the law.

This proposer group—comprising the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for Equality, and the Commissioner for Information—faces challenges in balancing independence and consensus. While tasked with collectively nominating candidates, these institutions operate under varying degrees of state influence, which affects their ability to nominate impartial and qualified candidates. The Commissioner for Equality stands out as the most independent member of this group, consistently resisting state pressure and advocating for fairness and transparency. In contrast, the Ombudsman and Commissioner for Information have faced criticism for yielding to government influence, raising doubts about their ability to act autonomously in the nomination process.

2. Proposer List

- Ombudsman (Zaštitnik građana)
- Commissioner for Equality (Poverenik za zaštitu ravnopravnosti)
- FOI Commissioner (Poverenik za informacije od javnog značaja i zaštitu podataka o ličnosti)

3. Candidate List

1. Saša Mirković (nominated by Commissioner for Equality)
2. Gordana Predić (nominated by Commissioner for Equality)
3. Stevica Smederevac (nominated twice, by Ombudsperson and FOI Commissioner).

4. Žarko Simović (nominated twice, by Ombudsperson and FOI Commissioner, irregularly substituted for Žarko Ristić).

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Non-existing.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Stevica Smederevac and Žarko Simović are long-time employees of REM, which directly disqualifies them from serving on the Council. Their inclusion in the list of candidates represents a clear conflict of interest and raises serious concerns about the integrity and independence of the nomination process. Their extended tenure at REM creates a perception that they are deeply embedded in the existing institutional framework, which undermines their ability to act independently in the Council. Both candidates appear to be state-imposed nominations, rather than independent choices by the authorized proposers. Their nominations suggest an intent to reinforce state control over the REM Council, ensuring decisions align with governmental priorities rather than reflect impartial regulatory oversight. Their longstanding affiliation with REM and the government's regulatory mechanisms raises questions about their loyalty to institutional independence versus their allegiance to state interests.

Procedural Irregularities

After the original nomination of Žarko Ristić, the proposers submitted nomination documents for Žarko Simović, effectively replacing the candidate post-deadline. The Law on Electronic Media and procedural guidelines mandate that nominations must be finalized before the deadline. Any changes post-deadline violates the principle of transparency and equal opportunity. Such substitutions compromise the integrity of the nomination process, as they circumvent the scrutiny required for candidates under public and legal review.

Employees of REM are part of its operational and administrative structure, meaning their candidacy for Council membership jeopardizes the body's independence. They cannot provide unbiased oversight over an institution where they were employed, especially during the times when REM did not act in accordance with the Law. Article 15 prohibits individuals who have any economic, professional, or contractual interest in entities related to media production, broadcasting, or regulatory activities. Employees of REM inherently have a direct professional interest in the operations of REM and are directly involved in its internal functions, which creates an unavoidable conflict of interest if they were to serve on its governing Council. Candidates must declare that they do not have any affiliations or interests that could impair the independence of the REM. An employee of REM cannot truthfully make this declaration, as their employment inherently conflicts with the Council's role.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

The group includes Saša Mirković and Gordana Predić, who meet the statutory requirements and demonstrate independence. These nominations reflect an understanding of the need for experienced and impartial individuals on the REM Council.

II Proposer Group: Universities Accredited in the Republic of Serbia

Summary

The proposer group plays a vital role in nominating members for the REM Council. While the Law allows any accredited university in Serbia to propose candidates, six universities submitted nominations in this election cycle. Among them, Megatrend University has been confirmed as unaccredited, rendering its nominations invalid. Some candidates, such as Milorad Vukašinović, are ineligible due to prior service on the REM Council, while others, like Zoran Jevtović, raise concerns over political bias and independence. These

issues, coupled with procedural irregularities in interpreting the Law on Electronic Media, cast doubt on the credibility, transparency, and integrity of the nomination process.

1. Proposer Group

Any accredited university, public or private can nominate candidates for the REM Council.

2. Proposer List

- University of Novi Sad
- Singidunum University
- University of Priština, Kosovska Mitrovica
- Educons University
- Megatrend University
- University of Arts in Belgrade

3. Candidate List

- Milorad Vukašinić (University of Novi Sad, Singidunum University, University of Priština, Kosovska Mitrovica, Educons University)
- Zoran Jevtović (University of Novi Sad, Singidunum University, University of Priština, Kosovska Mitrovica)
- Dragan Guzijan (Educons University, University of Priština, Kosovska Mitrovica)
- Aleksandar Gajović (Megatrend University)
- Ivan Medenica (University of Arts in Belgrade)
- Vanja Šibalić (University of Arts in Belgrade)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Megatrend University: It is confirmed that Megatrend University is not accredited and therefore does not meet the eligibility criteria for proposing candidates. The official publication of accredited higher education institutions and programs, updated as of the KAPK session on December 24, 2024, states that Megatrend University was last accredited on February 12, 2016, and notes that accreditation is valid for seven years. This confirms that Megatrend University's accreditation expired in February 2023, rendering it ineligible to propose candidates for the REM Council.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Milorad Vukašinić: His recent term as a REM Council member started on May 20, 2021, and ended on November 4, 2024. The Law on Electronic Media explicitly states that individuals who have been members of the REM Council are ineligible for re-election to ensure rotation and prevent consolidation of influence.

Zoran Jevtović: His position as the editor of the SNS-affiliated journal *Napredak* raises concerns about political bias and potential conflicts of interest. Jevtović's role as editor of the SNS-affiliated journal *Napredak* directly conflicts with the requirement for candidates to maintain independence from political influences. This makes his candidacy questionable under the law's integrity standards.

Aleksandar Gajović is not a legitimate candidate because his proposer, Megatrend University, is not accredited.

Procedural Irregularities

The Ministry of Information and Telecommunications issued a legal interpretation on the final day of the application period, December 16, 2024, suggesting that prior members of the REM Council may be eligible for re-election. However, this interpretation is both

legally unfounded, as it misrepresents the provisions of the law, and procedurally flawed, as it was issued too late for proper practical use, trying to benefit only candidates promoted through political pressure. This interpretation contrasts with the explicit provisions of the Law on Electronic Media, which were designed to ensure rotation and prevent undue influence within the Council. The Ministry's position creates significant legal and procedural ambiguities. It undermines the credibility of the process by allowing potential re-election of individuals who have previously held power within the regulatory body, raising concerns about transparency and fairness.

Megatrend University is confirmed to be unaccredited, and as such, it does not meet the eligibility criteria for proposing candidates. This directly invalidates the institution's ability to nominate Aleksandar Gajović, making his candidacy non-compliant with the requirements of the Law on Electronic Media. The inclusion of an unaccredited university as a proposer raises significant concerns about the integrity and oversight of the nomination process.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Ivan Medenica (University of Arts in Belgrade): A distinguished professional in the arts and cultural fields, Medenica demonstrates the expertise and independence required for the REM Council.

Vanja Šibalić (University of Arts in Belgrade): Šibalić's professional background in academic and media fields aligns with the statutory criteria for Council membership.

III Proposer Group: Associations of Electronic Media Publishers in the Republic of Serbia

Summary

The proposer group, consisting of associations representing electronic media publishers

in Serbia, is crucial for ensuring diverse and professional representation in the REM Council. However, the nomination process has been marked by issues related to transparency, adherence to statutory requirements, and questions about the qualifications of candidates. Ensuring the restart of the process in this group of proposers is essential for upholding the credibility and independence of the REM Council.

1. Specificities of Proposer Group

Associations of electronic media publishers are authorized by the Law on Electronic Media to nominate candidates for the REM Council. Each association must meet specific criteria, including having at least 30 licensed members who have been registered for at least three years before the public call. This group's role is to contribute to media pluralism and uphold democratic standards in Serbia's regulatory framework.

2. Proposer List

1. Association of Digital and Electronic Media "ADEM" (Asocijacije digitalnih i elektronskih medija "ADEM")
2. Association "New Network of Serbia" (Udruženje "Nova mreža Srbije")
3. Serbian Chamber of Commerce (Privredna komora Srbije)
4. Association of Radio Stations RAB (Udruženje radio stanica RAB)
5. Association of Media and Media Workers (Udruženje medija i medijskih radnika)
6. Association of Electronic Media ComNet (Udruženje elektronskih medija ComNet)
7. Association "Association Radio-Television of Serbia" (Savez udruženja "Asocijacija radio - televizija Srbije")

3. Candidate List

1. Jovana Vitez (ADEM, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, ComNet, Association "Radio-Television of Serbia")

2. Miloš Rajković (RAB Serbia, New Network of Serbia)
3. Tanja Vojvodić-Mitrović (ADEM, New Network of Serbia, Serbian Chamber of Commerce, RAB Serbia, Association of Media and Media Workers, ComNet, Association "Radio- Television of Serbia")

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

The Chamber of Commerce's Association for Creative Industries cannot be considered an eligible proposer under the Law on Electronic Media. By law, every legal person in Serbia must be a member of the Chamber of Commerce, which means that it does not operate as a representative association of electronic media publishers in the sense intended by the Law on Electronic Media. This fact renders it ineligible to nominate candidates for the REM Council.

The Association of Radio and Television of Serbia is organized as an "association of associations." Its structure as an umbrella organization representing other associations rather than individual licensed media publishers does not align with the Law on Electronic Media's requirement for direct representation of at least 30 licensed members registered for three years. This structure raises concerns about its compliance with legal criteria for proposers. Additionally, they did not provide evidence demonstrating that their members possess the required licenses, further challenging their eligibility.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Miloš Rajković previously served as a REM Council member from 2011 to 2017. Article 17 of the Law on Electronic Media stipulates that a REM member is elected for a six-year term and cannot be re-elected. This raises concerns about the legality of his candidacy and adherence to the law.

Tanja Vojvodić-Mitrović brings extensive expertise in marketing, with over 18 years of experience in strategy development, brand management, and digital communication. However, she lacks direct experience or formal qualifications stipulated by the Law.

Jovana Vitez's candidacy raises significant concerns. Her qualifications, notable in the field of voice acting, lack clear alignment with the regulatory or policy requirements outlined in the Law on Electronic Media. Specifically, there is no evidence of expertise in media regulation, governance, or experience with electronic media publishers, which undermines her suitability for the REM Council. Furthermore, her media experience comes exclusively from several radio stations, all owned by Maxim Media Group, with completely matching experience listed for all stations, which raises questions about the depth, breadth, and truthfulness of claims made, as well as potential political biases.

Procedural Irregularities

As previously stated, the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications has provided the legal opinion on the eligibility of former REM members for re-election. This inconsistency with the Law on Electronic Media, adds confusion and undermines the integrity of the nomination process.

For all proposers, there is only one proof provided during nomination period to demonstrate that somebody (not clearly stipulated which proposer provided the proof) has 30 media members with licenses, raising concerns about the thoroughness and accuracy of their claims for meeting the criteria prescribed by the Law.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

None of the candidates meet the statutory criteria prescribed by the Law on Electronic Media. This raises significant concerns about the integrity of the nomination process and the ability of any future REM Council member from this group to uphold its regulatory and democratic responsibilities.

IV Proposer Group: Associations of Journalists

Summary

The proposer group for associations of journalists has been dominated by organizations that fail to meet the legal requirements outlined in the Law on Electronic Media. While the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) is the only proposer in this process that complies with the criteria—having a transparent operational framework and a legitimate membership base—all other proposers, including entities like "PROUNS" and "UTE," are widely regarded as GONGOs. These organizations are primarily state-aligned and lack transparency, activity, and legitimacy, using fabricated or unverifiable membership claims to influence the process. This undermines the impartiality of the nomination process, as these proposers strategically push government-aligned candidates.

Despite clear legal and procedural irregularities, including ineligible proposers and candidates, these violations were overlooked, with no meaningful scrutiny or enforcement of compliance. Candidates such as Dejan Vuk Stanković and Petar Kočić, backed by these GONGOs, are known for their strong ties to state structures and conflicts of interest, directly contravening the requirements for impartiality and independence. In contrast, candidates proposed by NUNS, including Dr. Snježana Milivojević and Mileva Malešić, stand out for their credibility and qualifications, aligning fully with the law's stipulations for REM Council members. However, the broader procedural flaws raise serious concerns about the fairness and integrity of the selection process.

1. Proposer Group

According to the Law on Electronic Media, associations of journalists acting as authorized proposers must have at least 300 members who have paid their membership fees and must have been registered for at least three years before the public call for nominations. In Serbia, only three journalist associations meet these legal requirements: the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS), the Journalists' Association of

Serbia (UNS), and the Independent Journalists' Association of Vojvodina (NDNV). While legitimate proposers like the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS) bring credibility to the process through their well-established reputation and transparent operations, others lack the required membership base, transparency, and legitimacy. The others are GONGOs (Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations), which are often used to nominate government connected candidates for commissions that distribute state funds to the media.

2. Proposer List

1. Profesionalno udruženje novinara Srbije "PROUNS"
2. Društvo novinara Niša
3. Društvo novinara Vojvodine
4. Udruženje sportskih novinara Beograda "USNB"
5. Ujedinjeni Televizijski Eksperti "UTE"
6. Strukovna Asocijacija novinara Srbije
7. Nezavisno udruženje novinara Srbije – NUNS

3. Candidate List

1. Dejan Vuk Stanković (Profesionalno udruženje novinara Srbije "PROUNS", Društvo novinara Niša, Društvo novinara Vojvodine, Udruženje sportskih novinara Beograda "USNB", Ujedinjeni Televizijski Eksperti "UTE", Strukovna Asocijacija novinara Srbije)
2. Petar Kočić (Profesionalno udruženje novinara Srbije "PROUNS", Društvo novinara Niša, Društvo novinara Vojvodine, Udruženje sportskih novinara Beograda "USNB", Ujedinjeni Televizijski Eksperti "UTE", Strukovna Asocijacija novinara Srbije)

3. dr Snježana Milivojević (NUNS)
4. Mileva Malešić (NUNS)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

United TV Experts, the Professional Association of Journalists of Serbia, the Professional Association of Serbian Journalists, the Association of Sports Journalists, the Society of Journalists of Vojvodina, and the Society of Journalists of Niš proposed candidates Dejan Vuk Stanković and Petar Kočić.

All these proposers are well-known and frequently referenced as GONGO (Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations) entities. They are not genuine associations of journalists but are used strategically to nominate individuals loyal to the state for commissions responsible for allocating public funds for media co-financing.

The Society of Journalists of Vojvodina, which does not have a website or publicly available contact information. The confirmation of exactly 300 paid memberships was signed by the responsible individual, Petar Kočić, who is also the candidate.

The proposer United TV Experts is not, even by their statute, an association of journalists, which disqualifies them from being on the list of authorized proposers. Their confirmation of paid membership "for 310 members at 1 dinar per month" and the absence of a website are additional reasons for their elimination.

The proposer Association of Sports Journalists of Belgrade, which submitted also a false confirmation of paid memberships, also lacks a website or publicly available contact information.

The proposer Professional Organization of Serbian Journalists from Bujanovac, which submitted a confirmation of 312 paid memberships, has a website where the latest news was published in August 2022, and the last statement was issued in October 2022. While

a membership application form is prominently displayed on the website, there is no contact address for the secretariat where the form needs to be submitted in person.

The proposer Society of Journalists of Niš, which submitted also a statement of paid 305 memberships fees, does not list even a contact address on its website.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Dejan Vuk Stanković is a well-known political analyst and commentator in Serbia, widely recognized for his strong pro-government stances and frequent support of ruling party policies in public discourse. His alignment with state-backed narratives and frequent media appearances advocating for government positions suggest a clear political bias, raising serious concerns about his ability to serve as an impartial member of the REM Council. This is particularly problematic given the criteria outlined in the Law on Electronic Media, which stipulates that Council members must be individuals of high public reputation who have demonstrated a commitment to freedom of expression, human rights, civil society development, and the advancement of democracy. Stanković's overt political affiliations and public positioning directly contradict these requirements, casting doubt on his suitability for the role and undermining the credibility of the nomination process.

Petar Kočić is notorious in media circles for his role in committees that allocate public funds to media, often favoring outlets aligned with government interests. His controversial appointments to the Ministry of Information's commissions for media project funding highlights blatant conflicts of interest. As a member of various commissions in Vojvodina, Kočić has been accused of directing public funds to pro-government media, solidifying his reputation as a tool for state influence rather than an advocate for impartial media funding. His candidacy for the Regulatory Authority for Electronic Media (REM) Council is not only illegitimate but also a direct manifestation of government pressure and manipulation through GONGOs. By advancing such a compromised candidate, the government seeks to further tighten its control over REM,

undermining its independence and credibility. Kočić's nomination is a stark example of how state machinery weaponizes regulatory and funding bodies to entrench its grip on the media landscape, leaving little room for genuine democratic oversight.

Procedural Irregularities

The nomination process for candidates proposed by these associations has been marred by significant procedural irregularities. Despite clear legal requirements, none of these associations were asked to provide proof of membership payments or other documentation verifying their eligibility as proposers. While the issue of disqualifying these associations was put to a vote, none of the government MPs supported their disqualification, effectively allowing them to remain in the process despite evident grounds for removal, such as lack of transparency, prolonged inactivity, and questionable legitimacy. This failure to act on clear violations severely undermines the integrity and credibility of the selection process, raising serious concerns about compliance with legal and democratic standards.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Snježana Milivojević and Mileva Malešić, proposed by the Independent Journalists' Association of Serbia (NUNS), are highly legitimate candidates with extensive professional and academic credentials directly relevant to the responsibilities of the REM Council. Dr. Milivojević is a leading media scholar with decades of experience in media policy, communication, and media freedom advocacy, backed by significant international collaborations with organizations such as OSCE, UNICEF, and Freedom House. Mileva Malešić brings over four decades of journalism experience, with a focus on local media and civic engagement, as well as numerous accolades for her contributions to media development and gender equality. Their proven track records in advancing media standards and democratic principles strongly align with the legal requirements for REM Council members.

The legitimacy of their proposer, NUNS, is equally robust, as it is one of Serbia's most

respected journalist associations with a long-standing commitment to media freedom and ethical journalism. NUNS meets all legal criteria for authorized proposers, including being a well-established association with a significant membership base and a transparent operational framework. Together, the proposer and candidates represent a credible and competent nomination that adheres to both the letter and spirit of the law governing REM appointments.

V Proposer Group: Associations of Film, Scene and Drama Artists and Associations of Composers

Summary

The proposer group of associations representing film, stage, and dramatic artists, along with composers, includes organizations with clear legal standing under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media. While many proposers, such as UDUS, the Association of Film Actors of Serbia, GOS, and the Union of Dramatic Artists of Vojvodina, have long-standing traditions of supporting cultural development and advocating for artists' rights, others fail to meet the law's requirements. Organizations like Maestro International and the Association of Teachers of Music Education operate outside the scope of the mandated criteria, making their nominations invalid. Despite these discrepancies, the Committee failed to scrutinize the eligibility of all proposers, allowing procedural irregularities to undermine the credibility of the process.

On the candidate side, while individuals like Ivan Lalić and Željko Hubač, and Ira Prodanov Krajišnik demonstrate strong professional and cultural contributions, others like Leontina Pat and Aleksandar Petrović raise concerns. Their nominations are marked by conflicts of interest, insufficient alignment with REM's mandate, and undue political influence, reportedly exerted by individuals with questionable roles in REM. Ira Prodanov Krajišnik's candidacy raises some concerns due to her proposer, who appeared to be under political influence and also nominated Leontina Pat. This politicization, combined with the lack of

proper oversight and accountability, severely compromises the transparency and fairness of the selection process, calling into question the independence of REM and its capacity to uphold democratic standards in media regulation.

1. Proposer Group

The proposer group comprising associations of film, scene, and drama artists and associations of composers holds clear legal and professional legitimacy under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media. These associations are recognized as authorized proposers if they have been registered for at least three years prior to the public call. Their adherence to the outlined criteria under the law provides a strong foundation for their legitimacy in this process.

2. Proposer List

1. Udruženje scenskih umetnika, stručnjaka i saradnika u kulturi Srbije
2. Udruženje kompozitora Vojvodine
3. Udruženje nastavnika muzičke kulture Srbije
4. Međunarodni muzički centar Maestro International
5. Udruženje muzičkih umetnika Srbije – UMUS
6. Udruženje dramskih umetnika Srbije – UDUS
7. Udruženje filmskih glumaca Srbije
8. Glumačka organizacija Srbije – GOS
9. Savez dramskih umetnika Vojvodine

3. Candidate List

1. Leontina Pat (Udruženje scenskih umetnika, stručnjaka i saradnika u kulturi Srbije, Udruženje kompozitora Vojvodine, Udruženje nastavnika muzičke kulture Srbije,

Međunarodni muzički centar Maestro International, Udruženje muzičkih umetnika Srbije – UMUS)

2. Aleksandar Petrović (Udruženje scenskih umetnika, stručnjaka i saradnika u kulturi Srbije, Udruženje nastavnika muzičke kulture Srbije, Međunarodni muzički centar Maestro International, Udruženje muzičkih umetnika Srbije – UMUS)
3. Ira Prodanov Krajišnik (Udruženje kompozitora Vojvodine)
4. Ivan Lalić (Udruženje dramskih umetnika Srbije – UDUS, Udruženje filmskih glumaca Srbije, Glumačka organizacija Srbije – GOS, Savez dramskih umetnika Vojvodine)
5. Željko Hubač (Udruženje dramskih umetnika Srbije – UDUS, Udruženje filmskih glumaca Srbije, Glumačka organizacija Srbije – GOS, Savez dramskih umetnika Vojvodine)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Maestro International does not meet the criteria outlined in Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media, which requires proposers to be associations representing film, stage, dramatic artists, or composers. Maestro International focuses on music education and concert organization, with no evidence of representing performing artists or composers.

The Association of Teachers of Music Education operates within the education sector. Neither organization fulfills the legal requirement of representing diverse performing artists, making their nominations invalid.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Leontina Pat's candidacy documentation indicates her significant involvement with public cultural institutions, such as her position with the "Children Cultural Center of Belgrade,"

which compromises her impartiality. Although she has an extensive background in music and cultural programming, her expertise does not specifically align with media regulation or the technical aspects of REM's mandate as stipulated by law. Her strong association with government-funded cultural projects and institutions may indicate a potential bias toward state-aligned interests, which conflicts with the REM Council's need for independence and neutrality.

While Aleksandar Petrović has significant experience as a musician, producer, and voice actor in TV Happy, TV Pink, and radio stations connected to Maxim Media Plus (media connected to the proposers in Associations of Electronic Media Publishers) his professional background does not align with the criteria for REM Council members outlined in Article 10 of the Law on Electronic Media. There is no evidence that Petrović has engaged in public advocacy for freedom of expression, human rights, or democratic principles—key criteria for REM Council members. His nomination lacks substantive justification connecting his artistic experience to the responsibilities and objectives of REM, which undermines the legitimacy of his candidacy.

Procedural Irregularities

The nomination process for Leontina Pat and Aleksandar Petrović has been overshadowed by reports of undue pressure on organizations to support their candidacies. Reports suggest that Olivera Zekić, whose continued role in REM following the expiration of her term in the Council is legally questionable, exerted influence on these organizations to endorse these candidates. Such actions represent a severe breach of procedural integrity, undermining the fairness and independence of the nomination process. This situation raises serious concerns about the legitimacy of the endorsements and the transparency of the overall process, calling into question the impartiality of REM as an institution tasked with safeguarding media freedom and democratic standards.

Consequently, the nomination process was marked by procedural irregularities as the Committee overseeing the process failed to examine the eligibility of the mentioned

ineligible proposers, stating they were not obliged to do so. Despite evident grounds for questioning the compliance of some organizations with the criteria outlined in the Law on Electronic Media, the Committee refused to delve into the merit of their eligibility. Although the issue was formally put to a vote, none of the government MPs supported the disqualification of ineligible proposers, allowing the nominations to proceed unchecked. This lack of scrutiny and accountability undermines the transparency and credibility of the selection process.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

The nominations of Ivan Lalić, Željko Hubač and Ira Prodanov Krajišnik are characterized by exceptional professional experience and cultural contributions. Ivan Lalić, an accomplished director and organizer, and Željko Hubač, a recognized playwright, have significantly contributed to the development of dramatic arts and media narratives on both national and international levels. Ira Prodanov Krajišnik, a distinguished professor of musicology and cultural management, brings extensive academic expertise and experience in leading cultural institutions, although her candidacy raises some concerns due to her proposer, who appeared to be under political influence and also nominated Leontina Pat.

The associations UDUS, the Association of Film Actors of Serbia, GOS, and the Union of Dramatic Artists of Vojvodina have long standing traditions of advocating for artists' rights and advancing the cultural scene. Their expertise, legitimacy, and dedication to fostering art and media development make them credible proposers, ensuring that the nominations reflect the highest professional standards and promote cultural diversity in the media landscape.

VI Proposer Group: Associations of Citizens dealing with Freedom of Information

Summary

This proposer group, as defined by the Law on Electronic Media, is composed of associations with a long-standing commitment to freedom of expression and human rights. This list includes civil society organizations in Serbia, all of which meet the legal criteria for authorized proposers. Through their nominations of Rodoljub Šabić and Dubravka Valić Nedeljković, the group has demonstrated its dedication to advancing transparency, ethical journalism, and democratic governance.

The process has been largely free of political interference for this group, though concerns arose about the Committee's unequal treatment during the evaluation of Šabić's candidacy. Nevertheless, the process of nomination within this group serves as a benchmark for fairness and credibility in the broader nomination process.

1. Proposer Group

The Associations of Citizens dealing with Freedom of Information proposer group is defined under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media as associations whose goals include the promotion of freedom of expression. To qualify as authorized proposers, these associations must have been registered for at least three years prior to the public call and must have completed at least three projects in the area of freedom of expression in the last three years. This legal framework ensures that proposers are credible organizations with a proven commitment to advancing democratic principles and media freedoms.

2. Proposer List

1. "Slavko Ćuruvija fondacija"
2. Media i reform centar Niš

3. Udruženje Klara i Rosa
4. Udruženje "Okular"
5. "Asocijacija DUGA"
6. Udruženje građana za demokratiju i građansko obrazovanje "Građanske inicijative"
7. "Partneri za demokratske promene Srbija"
8. Poslovno udruženje "ANEM" Beograd
9. Udruženje "Balkanska istraživačka mreža" BIRN
10. Komitet pravnika za ljudska prava – YUCOM
11. Udruženje žena Peščanik
12. Novosadska novinarska škola
13. Beogradska otvorena škola
14. Autonomni ženski centar
15. Kuća ljudskih prava
16. Share fondacija
17. Odbor za ljudska prava Niš
18. Organizacija za lezbejska i ljudska prava – Labris
19. Omladinski centar SK13
20. Udruženje Šumadijskog centra za građanski aktivizam – RES PUBLICA
21. CRTA
22. Beogradski centar za ljudska prava

3. Candidate List

1. Rodoljub Šabić (all proposers)
2. Dubravka Valić Nedeljković (all proposers)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Candidates

Non-existing.

Ineligibility of Proposers

Non-existing.

Procedural Irregularities

The Committee demonstrated bias in the nomination process by selectively scrutinizing the candidacy of Rodoljub Šabić, the former Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Personal Data Protection. Despite numerous candidates from other groups who failed to clearly meet the legal criteria, Šabić was the only one required to submit additional documentation to justify how his previous position as Commissioner fits to the criteria stipulated in the Law on Electronic Media. After providing the requested explanation, the Committee accepted his nomination, revealing an unequal approach to the evaluation of candidates. This selective treatment raises concerns about fairness and impartiality in the whole nomination process.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Rodoljub Šabić and Dubravka Valić Nedeljković, supported unanimously by a broad coalition of respected organizations, bring exceptional expertise and credibility to their candidacies. Šabić's tenure as Commissioner demonstrated a steadfast commitment to freedom of information, transparency, and the protection of personal data. His extensive legal background and public service record make him highly qualified to uphold REM's

regulatory standards. Dubravka Valić Nedeljković, a distinguished academic and media expert, offers invaluable insight into media literacy and public communication. Her dedication to advancing democratic values and ethical journalism further strengthens her nomination.

This group of proposers experienced the least political pressure from the state compared to others, further demonstrating how electoral processes for the REM Council should be conducted. The commitment to fairness, broad participation, and merit-based nominations exhibited by this group sets an exemplary standard for how future elections should be implemented to strengthen democratic values and institutional integrity.

VII Proposer Group: Associations of Citizens dealing with Child Rights

Summary

The group of proposers working on child protection includes 38 legitimate associations across Serbia, which should enable this group to have independent candidates sent to the Assembly voting. However, the nomination process revealed significant irregularities, including procedural shortcomings, political pressures, a lack of transparency, and failures to verify candidates' compliance with legal requirements.

1. Proposer Group

This proposer group, defined under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media, consists of associations focused on protecting child rights. To qualify, these organizations must have been registered for at least three years before the public call and have completed at least three projects related to child protection in the past three years. This group ensures that media policies address children's safety, shielding them from harmful content and promoting their well-being. While its contributions are vital for safeguarding child rights in media regulation, the group's integrity can be undermined if proposers fail to meet legal criteria or operate as GONGOs, emphasizing the need for strict adherence to the law

to maintain the credibility and impact of their nominations.

2. Proposers List

1. Centar za nestalu i zlostavljaju decu
2. Mreža organizacija za decu Srbije – MODS
3. Udruženje "Podrška porodici SIDRO" Kragujevac
4. Udruženje Snaga porodice
5. Udruženje "Ružica"
6. "Udruženje Roma Novi Bečej"
7. Udruženje za pomoć osobama sa posebnim potrebama "Fenniks" Lebane
8. Naša Surdulica za sve
9. Srpsko-romsko udruženje građana "Integrativni global centar" Kragujevac
10. Beogradski centar za osobe sa invaliditetom
11. Centar "Novi Svet" Beograd
12. Udruženje za pomoć MNRO Ivanjica
13. Društvo za pomoć MNRO opštine Aleksandrovac
14. Udruženje za pomoć MNRO "Zagrljaj" Topola
15. Savez udruženja za pomoć MNRO Srbije
16. Udruženje za pomoć MNRO Novi Pazar
17. Udruženje "Bezbedno dete" Vlasotince
18. Udruženje pedagoga fizičke kulture Niš

19. Udruženje građana "Klub mladih lidera"
20. "Klub evropskih aktivista"
21. Udruženje građana Beli grad
22. Udruženje građana "Mreža mladih Srbije"
23. Prijatelji dece Srbije
24. "ASTRA – Akcija protiv trgovine ljudima"
25. Prijatelji dece Beograda
26. Prijatelji dece opštine Surčin
27. Nacionalna asocijacija roditelja i nastavnika Srbije
28. "Prijatelji dece opštine Zvezdara"
29. Udruženje građana "Libero"
30. Udruženje građana za borbu protiv trgovine ljudima i svih oblika nasilja nad ženama "ATINA"
31. Grupa za decu i mlade "Indigo" Niš
32. Udruženje za pomoć MNRO grada Sombora
33. "Inicijativa za prava osoba sa mentalnim invaliditetom MDRI-S"
34. Centar za proizvodnju znanja i veština Novi Sad
35. Kreativna pedagogija
36. Prijatelji dece opštine Požarevac
37. Centar za kreativni razvoj – Knjaževac
38. Udruženje za podršku deci i osobama sa invaliditetom i njihovim porodicama

"Realno"

39. Udruženje građana "Nexus – Vranje"
40. Somborski edukativni centar
41. "Bečejsko udruženje mladih"
42. Udruženje Dečiji centar Zaječar
43. Udruženje stručnjaka za podršku deci i porodici "FICE Srbija"
44. Užički centar za prava deteta
45. Udruženje StartHub Kosjerić
46. Udruženje "Imam ideju" Kraljevo
47. "Centar za prava deteta" Beograd
48. Nevladina organizacija "Praxis"
49. Udruženje "Forum civilne akcije FORCA"
50. Centar lokalne demokratije LDA
51. "Grupa Mašta" Prijepolje
52. Prijatelji dece Kragujevca
53. Udruženje građana Zlatiborski krug
54. Savez udruženja za pomoć mentalno nedovoljno razvijenim osobama u AP
Vojvodini
55. Udruženje za podršku osobama sa psihofizičkim smetnjama "Zajedno"
56. Udruženje za pomoć mentalno nedovoljno razvijenim osobama opštine Kula
"Plava ptica"

57. Društvo za pomoć mentalno nedovoljno razvijenim osobama Grada Kikinde
58. Međuopštinska organizacija za pomoć mentalno nedovoljno razvijenim osobama
Stara Pazova – Inđija
59. Prijatelji dece opštine Odžaci
60. Svetska organizacija Roma – "RrOMANIPEN"

3. Candidate List

1. Milorad Milinković (deceased)
2. Milanka Gvoić (21 organizations)
3. Dušan Aleksić (38 organizations)
4. Aleksandra Krstić (38 organizations)
5. Vladan Škorić (1 organization)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Several issues regarding transparency and connections between certain organizations and the authorities were identified during the process. The following observations were made:

Funding and potential conflict of interest: 11 organizations which backed candidates had recently received funding from the Ministry in December 2024. The amount allocated to organizations that supported the named candidates totaled 16,827,300 RSD. Some of these associations, such as "Centar za nestalu i zlostavljanu decu" and "Udruženje za pomoć MNRO Novi Pazar," received significant funds, while others exhibited questionable activities or appeared to have been established solely to participate in the calls.

Lack of evidence of work with children: Some associations have a general description of

their activities that does not confirm specific work with children, while. for some organizations (6 of them) there is no trace of the activities they carry out either on the Internet or on social media, so it is therefore not possible to determine whether they really meet the criteria of having carried out three projects in a specific area in the last three years. Legal representatives of four organizations are signatories supporting the candidacy of Aleksandar Vučić in the 2023 presidential elections.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Milanka Gvoić: Owner of the company AKSIOS MEDIA, which is engaged in media content production. Her candidacy is in violation of Article 15 of the Law on Electronic Media, as she owns a company involved in media content production, which constitutes a conflict of interest disqualifying her candidacy. She did freeze the current work of Aksios Media in December 2024, as visible in BRA, but she remains the owner, which is not allowed by the Law.

Vladan Škorić: The candidate's statement of acceptance of the candidacy for the REM Council is invalid.

Procedural Irregularities

Political pressure and ties to the authorities: Organizations that supported the candidates Milorad Milinković and Milanka Gvoić reported receiving calls from the office of Minister Tanja Macura, requesting their support for these candidates. Due to the political pressure of the Minister toward the more than 21 organizations, the legitimacy of these candidates is under question.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Aleksandra Krstić, professor in the Faculty of Political sciences, with a PHD and background in media and communication, brings extensive expertise in media literacy and ethical journalism, aligning with REM's mandate to safeguard vulnerable groups, particularly children, from harmful media content. Her work in promoting educational

and inclusive programming reflects a commitment to protecting children's rights in the media.

Dušan Aleksić, PHD Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš, a dedicated advocate for child rights, has a proven track record in working with grassroots organizations and addressing issues directly related to the scope of REM work. Both candidates demonstrate the expertise, integrity, and commitment necessary to contribute meaningfully to REM's regulatory framework, ensuring that the rights and interests of children remain at the forefront of media oversight.

There are 38 legitimate organizations involved, which is a majority, and if the procedure is followed correctly, two legitimate candidates should be sent to the Assembly by the Committee.

VIII Proposer Group: National Councils of National Minorities

Summary

This proposer group includes two National Councils of National Minorities: the Hungarian National Minority Council and the Bosniak National Council. While these councils are integral to representing minority interests, the nomination process was plagued by procedural irregularities and political interference. Reports indicate that the government exerted significant pressure on NMCs to centralize nominations, effectively undermining their autonomy. This led to a pre-coordinated decision favoring specific candidates, discouraging alternative nominations and limiting diversity in representation.

Candidate Ištvan Bodžoni's candidacy raises serious concerns due to his ownership and control of different media outlets, including RTV Panon, which directly conflicts with eligibility criteria outlined in the Law on Electronic Media. Despite this, no investigation was conducted into his candidacy. Muhedin Fijuljanin appears to meet eligibility requirements, but the broader procedural flaws overshadow his nomination. These issues emphasize the need for a transparent and independent nomination process to ensure the

fair representation of minority voices in the REM Council.

1. Proposer Group

This proposer group is defined under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media as National Councils of National Minorities (NMCs), which are authorized to nominate candidates for the REM Council. There are 24 recognized National Councils of National Minorities in Serbia, each representing the cultural, linguistic, and media interests of their respective communities. These councils play a vital role in ensuring the representation of minority voices in regulatory bodies.

2. Proposer List

1. Nacionalni savet mađarske nacionalne manjine
2. Bošnjačko nacionalno vijeće

3. Candidate List

1. Ištvan Bodžoni (Nacionalni savet mađarske nacionalne manjine, Bošnjačko nacionalno vijeće)
2. Muhedin Fijuljanin (Nacionalni savet mađarske nacionalne manjine, Bošnjačko nacionalno vijeće)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Non-existing.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Ištvan Bodžoni, as the director of RTV Panon and head of the Panonija Foundation, oversees a media network that includes Panon RTV, radio stations, and other media platforms serving the Hungarian community in Serbia. This ownership and involvement

with multiple media outlets directly conflict with the eligibility criteria for REM Council membership, as stated in the Law on Electronic Media. Additionally, his leadership and ties to Hungarian government-backed investments raise questions about his independence and the potential influence of political agendas on his candidacy. Bodžoni's direct connection to Panon RTV and related outlets disqualifies him under this regulation. Reports highlight Bodžoni's close ties to Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Fidesz, raising concerns about undue external influence. Financially, Pannon RTV has received substantial support from the Hungarian government. As reported by independent media, between 2012 and 2019, the organization was granted over 9 million euros, with nearly half of this amount allocated in 2019 alone.

Procedural Irregularities

The nomination process for candidates proposed by the National Councils of National Minorities (NMCs) was marred by significant procedural irregularities and allegations of government interference. Reports indicate that a meeting of the government coalition was held where one of the discussed issues was to coordinate the nominations, during which it was decided that the Hungarian National Minority Council would propose the candidates, while other NMCs were expected to support this decision. Ana Brnabić was present at the meeting. In subsequent contacts with other NMCs, representatives expressed reluctance to propose alternative candidates or challenge the government's decision, citing concerns about potential repercussions. This coordination highlights the pressure exerted by the government to centralize control over the nomination process, effectively undermining the autonomy of the councils and limiting the diversity of voices in the candidate selection. Such actions severely compromise the integrity and independence of the process, reducing it to a politically orchestrated exercise rather than a democratic and transparent selection.

The Committee failed to address Bodžoni's clear conflict of interest as a media owner, and did not vote on during the voting process proposed by the opposition MPs. Despite the explicit legal prohibition, no investigation was conducted into his eligibility. This lack

of scrutiny, combined with selective demands for additional documentation from other candidates, reflects a biased and inconsistent application of the rules.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Muhedin Fijuljanin does not appear to have a direct conflict of interest that would disqualify him from serving on the REM Council. However, his nomination stays overshadowed by the procedural irregularities and government influences on the National Minority Councils' (NMCs) role in the process.

IX Proposer Group: Churches and Religious Communities

Summary

This proposer group, comprising churches and religious communities, is tasked with nominating candidates who reflect the diverse religious perspectives in Serbia's media landscape. However, this group's participation in the current process has been marred by procedural and eligibility issues. While the Serbian Orthodox Church submitted consent letters for its candidates, the Roman Catholic Church, the Islamic Community of Serbia, and the Jewish Religious Community did not formally submit their proposals, undermining the transparency and formality of their participation. Additionally, the Committee for Information and Culture failed to address missing documentation, allowing incomplete nominations to proceed unchecked.

Candidate Snežana Miljković did not provide a certified diploma, and Sanja Anđelković's history includes allegations of hate speech and discrimination, raising questions about her suitability for a role demanding impartiality and adherence to ethical standards. Procedural irregularities, combined with the lack of clear endorsements from all proposer institutions, highlight significant weaknesses in the integrity of the nomination process for this group. Furthermore, the absence of demonstrable strengths among the nominations further emphasizes the need for greater accountability and rigor in future elections.

1. Proposer Group

This proposer group is defined under Article 12 of the Law on Electronic Media as consisting of churches and religious communities. These entities are authorized to nominate candidates for the REM Council to represent the interests and perspectives of their communities. To qualify as proposers, these institutions must formally submit nominations in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Law.

2. Proposer List

1. Srpska pravoslavna crkva
2. Rimokatolička crkva
3. Islamska zajednica Srbije
4. Jevrejska verska zajednica
5. Mešihat islamske zajednice u Srbiji

3. Candidate List

1. Sanja Anđelković (Srpska pravoslavna crkva, Rimokatolička crkva, Islamska zajednica Srbije, Jevrejska verska zajednica)
2. Snežana Miljković (Srpska pravoslavna crkva, Rimokatolička crkva, Islamska zajednica Srbije, Jevrejska verska zajednica)
3. Mevlud Dudić (Mešihat islamske zajednice u Srbiji)
4. Misala Pramenković (Mešihat islamske zajednice u Srbiji)

4. Issues and Challenges

Ineligibility of Proposers

Non-existing.

Ineligibility of Candidates

Snežana Miljković did not submit a certified diploma.

Sanja Anđelković was reported to REM in October 2020 for hate speech and discrimination against Roma. According to the minutes of the 395th extraordinary session held on April 26, 2021, it was stated: “The complainant assessed the host’s statement as discriminatory, biased, and unobjective because she ‘unsubstantiatedly concluded that the nearby Roma settlement is certainly responsible for the garbage.’ The complainant’s conclusion of racial discrimination was based on ‘spreading prejudice and discrimination against a community that is already multiply marginalized.’” The complaint was rejected because, as stated by the Expert Service for Supervision: “The Monitoring and Analysis Department is not in a position to determine the accuracy of claims regarding whether the mentioned settlement is the cause of uncleanliness or not, nor is the complaint supported by evidence that could substantiate that the host’s statement (who is professionally familiar with communal issues in Belgrade) is inaccurate.” At that time, the head of REM’s Monitoring and Analysis Department was Stevica Smederevac (also now a REM candidate proposed by the Ombudsman and the Commissioner). According to Article 15 of the Law on Electronic Media, candidates for the REM Council must not engage in actions or behavior that undermine the reputation, independence, or integrity of the Regulator, including hate speech or discriminatory practices.

Procedural Irregularities

The Committee for Information and Culture did not ask missing documents to be amended during the period allowed by the Law.

The Serbian Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Islamic Community of Serbia, and the Jewish Religious Community did not formally submit a proposal. Instead, only the candidates provided the required documents.

The candidates submitted their consent to be nominated by the Serbian Orthodox

Church, and not individually by the Roman Catholic Church, Islamic Community of Serbia, or Jewish Religious Community.

5. Strengths of the Nominations

Non-existing.