

YOUNG PEOPLE AND MEDIA IN CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE, THE CIS & BALTIC STATES

A Report Prepared by InterMedia

for UNICEF

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The opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the policies or views of UNICEF

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About the Authors

InterMedia is a nonprofit company that conducts global research and evaluation, and specializes in the field of media and communications. InterMedia has been carrying out media, audience and opinion research in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States for over four decades—as part of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty until 1994 and since then as an independent not-for-profit research organization. Now based in Washington, D.C. with associates in the United Kingdom, InterMedia continues to work in the region and maintains a growing number of close relationships with leading researchers, sociologists and media experts across the region. InterMedia is staffed by professional researchers who have the area background and language capabilities necessary to carry out effective work in their respective regions.

Each year, InterMedia carries out dozens of quantitative studies on media behaviour and attitudes, as well as qualitative studies (focus groups, in-depth interviews and panel studies) exploring informational needs and media preferences in almost all of the countries in the CEE/CIS/Baltic States area. InterMedia surveys include populations aged 15 and above, and its qualitative research often takes special interest in young people as representatives of future target audiences.

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For more information about InterMedia, please visit www.intermedia.org

A Note on Methodology

InterMedia relied on a three-pronged approach to carry out UNICEF's request for a rich and concise analysis of trends among young people and media in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States:

First, InterMedia analysed its own data on young people and the media based on surveys, focus groups and interviews InterMedia has carried out in most of the countries in the region over the past decade. Throughout the paper, all references to data are based on InterMedia surveys unless otherwise indicated. While the survey data in this paper refer to youth aged 15-24 unless otherwise noted, the overall analysis attempts to address young people in the broader age range of 10-24.

Second, InterMedia attempted to conduct a review of as much existing literature on the subject of young people and the media as time allowed. UNICEF was very helpful in referring InterMedia to many of the interesting and important materials that are included in the bibliography.

Third, in conjunction with UNICEF, InterMedia developed a questionnaire for an informal survey of researchers, sociologists and media experts in the region. (The questionnaire is attached in Appendix 3.) These individuals and their organizations follow youth issues and trends in media as part of their work and they contributed up-to-date and insightful information to supplement the quantitative analysis. InterMedia is deeply grateful to the more than two dozen individuals who took the time to participate in the survey, and we acknowledge their valuable contributions. The names of the individuals who contributed to this study are listed in the following section.

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Executive Summary

Background

The last decade has witnessed sweeping transformations across the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States (CEE/CIS and the Baltic States). Arguably, among the most wide-reaching and significant changes in this region have been those that have occurred in the media. After ten years, many questions have arisen about the nature of these changes, including how the media has helped to transform these societies or, conversely, how people in these societies have contributed to changes in the media. These questions apply particularly to children and youth, those aged 10-24, the first generation reaching adulthood since the fall of the Berlin Wall.

UNICEF's Regional Office for CEE, CIS and the Baltic States commissioned InterMedia to prepare this report on the major trends and issues concerning young people and media in the 27 countries that make up the region. InterMedia analysed its own survey data from the past ten years, reviewed existing literature on the subject, and consulted with media experts and youth from across the region in order to begin to understand—within a child's rights framework—what the prospects are for young people to contribute to the strengthening of democratic and independent media in their respective countries.

Media Use

Young people have clearly benefited in many ways from the positive changes that have occurred throughout the region over the past decade. Unlike their predecessors, young people today have access to a greater diversity of information sources as a result of political, economic and technological developments. There has been a proliferation of many new private TV and radio stations and a new private press, foreign programming and media are now more widely available, access to cable and satellite television and the Internet has been steadily increasing, and official censorship has disappeared. All of these developments have left many young people and adults across the region feeling that they are better informed and that they have access to more professional and entertaining programming than before.

Indeed, young people in the region are heavy consumers of the media. Large numbers of young people watch TV daily—primarily for entertainment programming—making it their favourite pastime. Significant numbers of young people also regularly tune in to radio, although more to listen to music than to information. In addition, although access to computers and the Internet is still low throughout most of the region, young people are becoming involved and showing interest in the “information revolution” at rates generally much faster than adults.

At the same time, there exists an informational divide both among countries with varying levels of political, social and economic reform, and within countries—a divide primarily between the better-educated, better-off, urban youth and the less-educated rural youth. This divide determines not only the access to, use of and preferences for different types of media, but also, to a lesser degree, their social involvement.

Media Attitudes and Preferences

Young people in this region, like their peers around the world, turn to the media for entertainment and for youth-related issues and information (pop music, fashion, computers, sports, education and employment opportunities, interpersonal relations, etc.). They also tend to prefer material that is presented in a dynamic as opposed to a dull or official manner, as well as material that is prepared and presented by young people themselves.

Young people seem to have mixed views on media that targets and features youth. On the one hand, they are generally satisfied with this type of media as a source of entertainment and “infotainment.” They also appreciate publications and programmes that discuss young people’s personal problems and relationships—topics that they find difficult to discuss with adults and that were once considered taboo.

On the other hand, young people in the region commonly feel that the media does not pay sufficient attention to youth in general, and that when it does address this age group, it typically stereotypes young people in overly positive or negative ways — as trendsetters and high-achievers or as problems and victims. The ordinary young person, who lives a typical life with its routine ups and downs, often does not find him/herself represented in the extreme versions of youth depicted in the media.

In spite of the strong preference for entertainment media, young people across the region display a strong interest in political developments and issues. While they are tired of party politics, often cynical toward the prospects for reform and democratic development, and may not regularly follow the news, they are not apathetic or indifferent to the role of media in society. Rather, many young people expect the media to be truthful, balanced and objective, and are quick to sense when the media is attempting to manipulate information. For this reason, young people tend to trust private, independent sources more than the state-owned media.

Media Influence

Young people and adults alike recognize the potential of the media to influence youth attitudes and behaviour in both positive and negative ways. As a positive influence, the media can help young people understand the issues facing their societies, widen their world outlook, destroy stereotypes and promote tolerance and social participation. On the negative side, the media can distort reality, manipulate for political or commercial ends, create harmful or unrealistic stereotypes and promote intolerance and apathy.

Just how much the mass media is influencing young people in the region, and the ways in which it may be doing this, is debatable. However, growing numbers of people are concerned about the lack of educational programming for young people and the effect of a steady diet of rather low-quality, commercialised entertainment media on young audiences. Some sociologists in the region talk about the media’s contribution to a confusion in values among many young people today, which they attribute in part to the loss of a sense of national culture, a misguided understanding of right, wrong and reality, and a decreased emphasis on education and social participation.

Implications for Policy and Programmes

An opportunity exists to ensure the strengthening and development of independent, democratic media in these transition countries, as well as to ensure that young people contribute to the creation of responsive and responsible media in the future. In order to meet these goals, however, local, national and international bodies will need to lend their assistance in terms of training, technical and logistical assistance, financial support, guided research efforts and implementation of journalistic guidelines and policies.

Introduction

The past decade has witnessed sweeping transformations across the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States. Arguably, among the most wide-reaching and significant changes in this region have been those that have occurred in the media. After ten years, many questions have arisen about the nature of these changes, including how the media has helped to transform these societies or, conversely, how people in these societies have contributed to changes in the media.

These questions apply particularly to young people, those aged 10-24, the first generation to reach adulthood since the fall of the Berlin Wall. This paper sets out to explore the major trends and issues concerning young people and the media across countries¹ in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States—from media use, attitudes and influence to the various ways young people currently get involved in journalism and the media. It is intended to be a broad and hopefully initial exploration of just how young people are influencing and being influenced by the media today and what the prospects are for young people to contribute to the strengthening of democratic and independent media in their respective countries.

A Child's Rights Framework

While this paper is based on recent quantitative and qualitative research data, as well as on consultations with sociologists and media experts from across the region, the analysis was carried out with a child's rights perspective, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Since its adoption by the UN General Assembly in 1989, the CRC has become the most widely accepted human rights treaty ever. It has been [ratified by 191 countries](#), with just two countries failing to ratify the treaty. All the governments in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States region have ratified it, formally committing themselves to meeting the obligations and responsibilities outlined in the Convention.

The CRC spells out in an unequivocal manner the rights to which every child is entitled, regardless of where born or to whom, regardless of sex, religion, or social origin. The body of rights enumerated in the CRC are the rights of all children *everywhere*. Given the Convention's comprehensive nature, it is hardly surprising that it focuses considerable attention on the media's importance to children.

Article 17 deals explicitly with the media. The general thrust of this clause is that the media can play an important role in disseminating information, which contributes to promoting the child's well-being in the broadest sense. The State is given a number of specific tasks, which are described as follows:

Article 17

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity

of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

(a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;

(b) Encourage international cooperation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

(c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;

(d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;

(e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right of the children to express their own views in matters affecting them.

Article 13 enshrines the right to freedom of expression:

“(...) This right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child’s choice.” (CRC, article 13.1)

Article 17, together with articles 12 and 13, should contribute not only to the development of well-informed citizens but to young people’s voices being heard more and more through the mass media. In a sense, it sends a clear message that children should be participants in, as well as beneficiaries of the Information Revolution.

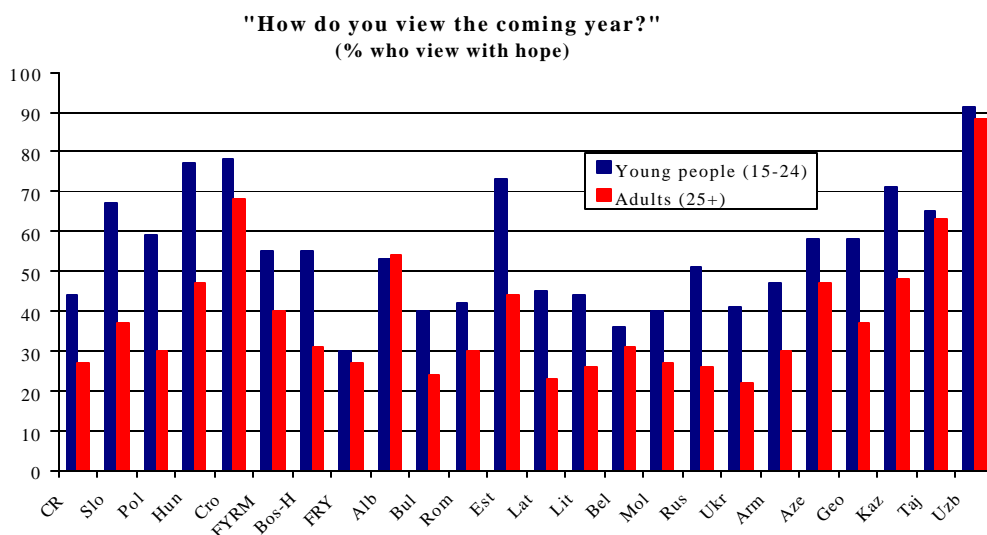
Other pertinent articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are:

- Article 31, confirming the right of children to participate in cultural and artistic life
- Article 42, requesting States to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known
- Article 44.6, requiring States to make their reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child widely known.

Young People: A Broad and Mixed Portrait

The 65 million young people between the ages of 15 and 24² living today in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States are the first generation to be raised and educated since the fall of the Berlin Wall. While the greater freedoms enjoyed by this generation are indisputable, and while many have had opportunities their parents could only dream of, the problems of young people are more complex than is generally thought. Despite economic reforms, living standards in the region have been slipping, and output levels in half of the countries have remained below the 1989 figures.³ Unemployment is higher among young people than among adults, and those who do have a job are often either the breadwinners, or contribute significantly to the family budget. Young people today also face a variety of growing social problems, ranging from increased substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases to ethnic strife and deepening poverty. In addition, many of the young people in the region have lived through political turmoil, while others are living in countries where citizens still have limited rights.

In spite of the various countries' cultural and historical peculiarities, and their differing degrees of success in weathering the transition, there have been sufficient common economic, political and social experiences to draw a broad portrait of the young people in the countries in the region. In keeping with the very nature of youth, these young people try to be optimistic; as shown in the table below, they are more hopeful than adults. Nonetheless, the percentage of both young people and adults feeling optimistic about the future has been declining (see Tables 2 and 3). Although generally more confident than adults, young people increasingly feel helpless in the face of what is happening in the world today, and believe that the lot of ordinary people is getting worse, instead of better.



Source: InterMedia Surveys (data refer to 1997 for Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for others)

As shown in Table 4, young people, in common with adults, are increasingly sceptical about their countries' governments and parliaments and feel that those in power do not care about the average citizen. While generally optimistic about the future, young people show little confidence in their own ability to change the course of world events. At the same time, experts in and on the region observe that young people, more than adults, are open to the outside world and eager to communicate with their peers. They have little fear of foreign influences and a far greater curiosity for new technologies.

Regrettably, analysis of young people in the region reveals an existing divide not only among countries with varying levels of political, social and economic reform, but also within the countries — a divide primarily between the generally better-educated, better-off, urban youth and the less-educated rural youth. This divide determines not only the access to, use of and preferences for different types of media, but also, to a lesser degree, their social involvement. In general, socially active youth are better educated, come from better-off or better-educated families, and live in big cities. Discussions with experts and survey data from across the region suggest that there is little chance for the information divide among and within countries to narrow at any time in the near future, at least not without a significant boost to national economies.

Young People's Use of The Media

Television

Unlike their predecessors, young people in the region today have access to a diversity of information sources as a result of political, economic and technological developments. The privatisation of the media, though carried out to varying degrees around the region, has led to the emergence of many new private TV and radio stations and a new private press. Illustrating this change is the fact that, while before 1989 countries usually had two or three state TV channels, by 2000, a substantial number of young people in the Central and Eastern European countries, Estonia and Lithuania could watch more than 14 TV channels (see Table 5). The situation is quite different in the Central Asian republics and in most of the countries in the Western CIS, where the number of television channels is more limited. In general, however, young people across the region have access to more TV channels than adults (see Table 5).

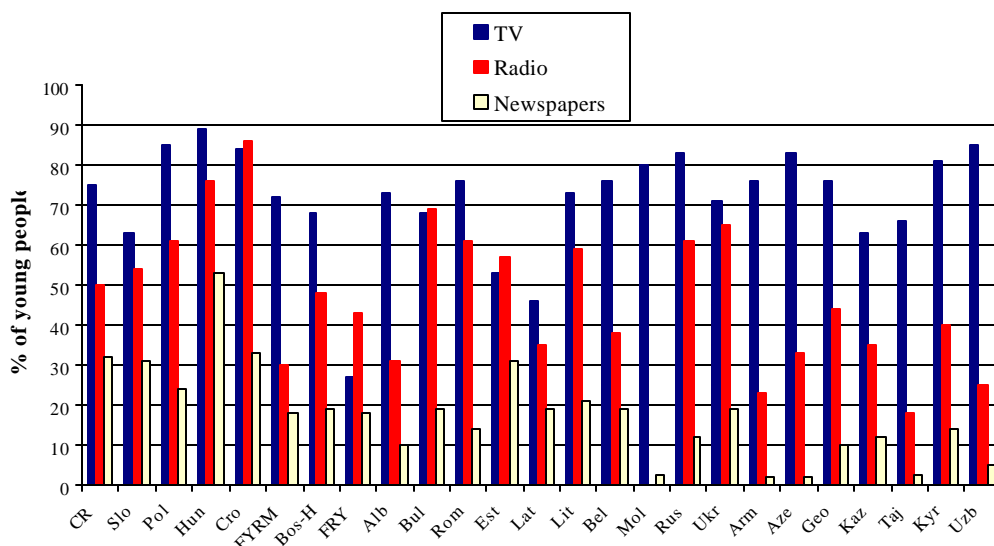
The most significant development of the last decade has been the growing role and importance of electronic media, particularly TV, for young people and adults alike. Television viewing increased across all age groups between 1993 and 2000 and is the most common pastime throughout the region. Viewership among young people throughout the region went up by an average of approximately 11 percentage points (see Table 9). The largest increases occurred in Lithuania, Croatia, Belarus and Moldova (23 per cent). Increased television viewing can be explained in part by the greater variety and improved quality of much of the television fare, as well as by the fact that watching TV is free or far less expensive than other forms of leisure that now cost more than ever before (such as books, magazines, film, theatre, concerts, etc.).

Cable TV is increasingly available in most of the countries, providing young people with access to an even greater number of programmes. The percentage of young people with cable access is generally higher than that of adults, and is highest in Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania, where over half of young people had access to cable TV by the year 2000. The lowest levels of cable access occur in Central Asia, the Caucasus (except for Georgia), the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Albania. In other countries, 15-30 per cent of young people had access to cable (see Table 6)

Similarly, satellite TV is enjoying a high degree of popularity, with viewing rates rising in most of the countries between the early and late 1990s. Satellite TV viewing appears to be most prevalent in Central and Southeastern Europe and in the countries of former Yugoslavia, with lower levels of viewing in the CIS countries (except Moldova). The greatest increases in satellite TV viewing among young people occurred in Moldova and in Croatia (see Table 7).

Since 1989, TV has become the main source of information and entertainment for both young people and adults in all countries. Approximately 75 per cent of young people in the region watched TV each day by the late 1990s or 2000, up from about 63 per cent in the early 1990s. In Poland in 1999, for example, 85 per cent of young people watched TV, 61 per cent listened to the radio, and 24 per cent read newspapers on a daily basis. In Uzbekistan in 2000, 85 per cent watched TV, 25 per cent listened to the radio, and five per cent read newspapers (see table below and Table 9).

Daily Media Use by Young People (15-24)



Source: InterMedia surveys (data refer to 1997 for Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for others)

In fact, in 2000, the amount of time young people in most countries spent watching TV each day was considerably higher than the time they spent on any other activity. The average young person in the region spent between two and four hours per day watching TV. The average Hungarian youth, for example, watched TV for four hours

a day, just five minutes less than his counterpart in the U.S.. In the course of a week, an average Romanian youth spent 22.4 hours watching TV, compared with 13.1 hours listening to the radio, 8.1 hours listening to music and 4.1 hours reading books. In Russia, young people on average spent 23.7 hours a week watching TV, 11.4 hours listening to the radio, 10.8 hours listening to music, 6.6 hours reading books and three hours reading newspapers (see table above and Table 10).

With such a high proportion of overall viewership, gender differences in television viewing tend to be minor. The surveys show that generally, a slightly higher percentage of young males than females watches television daily in most of the countries of the former Soviet Union, and a slightly higher percentage of young women watch television in countries in Southeastern Europe and the Balkans. (see Table 20).

The daily use of television, the long hours spent by young people watching it and the considerable trust they place in the medium (see Table 4) suggest that the bulk of young people's information about the world probably comes from this source. At the same time, the data show that entertainment is by far the preferred choice of television programming among young people across the region (see Table 18).

Radio

Another significant development in media use across the region over the past decade has been the growing use of radio as a source of entertainment rather than information. There has been a boom in radio listening, particularly among young people, as a result of the emergence of dozens of private radio stations in many of the countries. According to 2000 survey data from across the region, after television viewing, listening to the radio is young people's second most popular activity.

Interestingly, the same gender patterns of daily usage are found for radio as for television. Again, surveys indicate that for the most part, a higher proportion of young males tune in to radio in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and a generally higher proportion of young females listen in the countries of Southeastern Europe and the former Yugoslavia. As Tables 21 and 22 on listenership to state and private radio demonstrate, the size of youth audiences to radio can vary greatly, depending on the quality of state broadcasting and the availability of private alternatives.

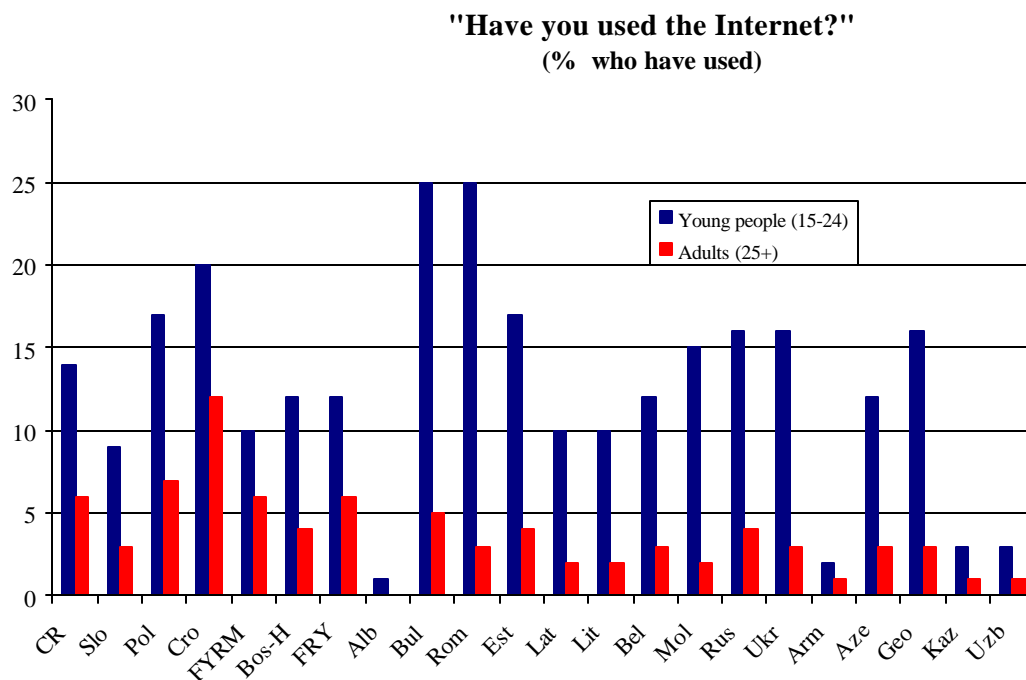
Almost all of youth radio listening is to FM stations that broadcast predominantly pop music, with at most a few hourly news bulletins. However, it is noteworthy that listening to the political-information programming of international radio stations — such as the BBC, VOA, RFE/RL and Deutsche Welle — remains surprisingly high among young people. For example, according to 1999 surveys, 24 per cent of young people listened to international radio stations in Romania, 17 per cent in Azerbaijan and 16 per cent in Latvia. Listening to international radio typically peaks during times of crisis and is often a matter of tradition, but it is also a reflection of the remaining need for high-quality, accurate and reliable information, which is still lacking in many countries in the region (see “Quality of Journalism” on p. 16).

Nonetheless, some local radio stations have been very successful in attracting and informing the more socially active segments of the population — young and old alike.

The ANEM network of approximately 30 independent radio stations in FR Yugoslavia is a notable example of popular stations that have become a “major source of diverse kinds of information (including music) for the young audience interested in social life.”⁴

The Internet

The Internet has also been gaining popularity among young people, though at a much slower pace due to economic difficulties. In spite of the existing differences among the countries in the region, the use of computers and the Internet is rising steadily, faster among young people than among adults, and faster among young men than among young women (see table below and Table 24).



Source: InterMedia surveys (data refer to 1997 for Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for others)

The often wide differences between the number of computer-literate young people and adults imply that the younger generation is generally more eager and more interested in the Information Revolution. An average of 36 per cent of young people across the region have used a computer, compared with nine per cent of adults. The difference between the percentage of young people and adults can be as high as 44 percentage points, such as in Ukraine in 2000 (see Table 14).

Media experts and journalists from the region who participated in this study all noted young people’s highly enthusiastic response to the Internet as a source of information, communication, socialising and entertainment. However, in most of the countries, Internet use is limited to the better-off and better-educated urban youth (see “Young People and the Internet” on p. 25.)

Print Media

In contrast to the steady rise in television viewing, radio listening and Internet use, the print media have experienced a setback from the role they once played. Newspaper use among young people is now quite low, with an average of less than 20 per cent reading a paper daily. Usually, the proportion of young women readers is higher than that of young men, with notable exceptions in Croatia, Romania and Russia (see Table 23).

Under communism, while there certainly was tight control and censorship of the media, there was also a variety of newspapers and magazines for all age groups and interests. Wide distribution and low cost made them easily accessible to all, and people were avid consumers of the print media. Citizens of communist countries developed special skills for reading between the lines and distinguishing between run-of-the-mill propaganda and signs that changes were in store. Indeed, some of the most important shifts in official party attitudes and policies were first identified through the change of a few words in an article, or through the publication of differing views in specialized magazines on political and economic theory, sociology or culture.

Young people in particular enjoyed a fairly vibrant press, even if the content was largely dictated by official ideology and values. All levels of the communist youth organization had their own publications, which addressed the interests and concerns of children, youth and students. In addition, communist regimes made some effort to ensure that publications existed in different languages for certain ethnic and minority groups. Although the intent may have been indoctrination, and there was no need to evaluate audience appeal or share, these publications were at least available. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, this specific youth press has largely disappeared and has not been replaced by a regular alternative forum for young people to communicate and express their views. In the words of the media experts consulted for this paper:

The specialized informative youth press — which used to be the most liberal part of the media system, read both by the young and the rest — disappeared altogether. In the 1980s, during the communist regime, the youth information papers (the weeklies “Student,” “Youth,” “Youth Journals”) were the main carriers of alternative ideas and critical opinions, with the greatest media autonomy. The youth information press has never been renewed. New, entertainment oriented, papers have appeared — some of them specialized for the young audience. However, the general use of the press was drastically reduced along with the general impoverishment of the population.⁵

Newspaper readership levels have declined in many countries in the region, especially in those countries experiencing the greatest economic difficulties. In part, this is a result of the improved quantity and quality of information available from TV and radio. However, this is also due to the fact that many publications have had to fold because they were not able to support themselves without government subsidies and could not attract sufficient advertisers or subscribers. Those that did survive have had to raise their prices, making them unaffordable for many to buy on a regular basis. Lastly,

the distribution system was so badly weakened in many countries that it is now common for newspapers and magazines to arrive in rural areas weeks and months late, if at all.

An Uzbek sociologist and researcher gave a bleak a picture of the print media in his country:

In villages today there is practically no press, either for adults or for children and youth. The postal system does not work — the delivery system for the press has been destroyed. Where the press is distributed, it arrives late. Press that is 2-3 months old lies on the benches of provincial cities....As a result of cutbacks in subsidies, public libraries cannot subscribe to newspapers....Before the fall of the Berlin Wall, there were specialized newspapers and magazines for children and youth in Russian, Uzbek, Karakalpak and Tajik languages. The publications for young people have practically disappeared in the provinces and in the country as a whole.⁶

Survey data illustrate the decline in newspaper reading among young people in many of the countries in the region between the early and late 1990s. In general, newspaper readership levels tend to be lower today than in the past among young people in the CIS and Southeastern Europe. The steepest declines over the past several years occurred in Russia, Romania and Kyrgyzstan (16, 11 and 8 percentage points, respectively). In other countries in these areas, newspaper reading among youth declined between three and seven percentage points (see Table 12).

In contrast, newspaper reading is higher and has even increased among young people in some countries in Central Europe, FR Yugoslavia and the Baltic States. The biggest rise occurred in Hungary (12 percentage points) and Poland and Croatia (6 percentage points) (see Table 12).

The publications in strongest demand seem to be tabloid newspapers, popular weekly and specialized magazines on computers, fashion, business and music. Many of these publications are of high quality, with slick and appealing content that cater to young people's interests, yet are often are costly for the average young person (or adult).

Expectations of the Media

On the whole, young people in the region are no different from other young people around the world in the sense that they are mainly interested in youth-related issues and information. They look to the media to provide them with a sufficient choice of sources and information that correspond to their own interests (from pop music to education and employment opportunities to interpersonal relations). In addition — to a greater degree than adults, who may focus more on substance than style — young people often show a general preference for dynamic and colourful stories. Feedback both from focus groups with young people over the past decade and from media experts consulted for this study reveals that for many young people, the way in which information or entertainment is conveyed is just as important as what is conveyed. If interesting subject matter, be it political, economic or health-related, is presented in a boring, official

manner, young people will often lose interest. Conversely, if fairly unremarkable events or issues are presented in a lively, original, engaging manner, young people will be attracted.

According to previous research in the region, unlike most adults, young people do not generally have a strong affiliation with particular media sources or programmes. Young people's tastes are fickle, and their identification with, or loyalty to, a particular station or media personality can be fleeting. In addition, they are so used to their greater ability to choose that if they do not like something, they simply turn to something else.

Past research has also shown that young people with average and lower levels of education tend to perceive the media primarily as a source of entertainment and "infotainment", and are generally satisfied with what is offered to them. Media experts and youth who contributed to this analysis further pointed out that these young people, along with their better-educated peers, also look to the media as a source of information about personal problems, usually relationships. This in part explains the popularity of publications and programmes providing advice on issues that young people obviously find difficult to discuss with their parents. This is also a reason why some young people believe that the media now covers their lives more fully, with topics once taboo featured prominently in media stories. As for more serious information, the lesser-educated young people have little interest in current affairs and little inclination to scrutinise the media, and they generally consider the information media boring.

The situation among the better-educated youth can be very different. According to previous studies and many of the consulted media experts, these young people tend to take a more active interest in the information media and expect them to provide reliable, credible, balanced and fair information. They look not only for a truthful representation of life, but also for meaningful discussions of political, economic and social issues. Some may expect the media to be a corrective in society and to provide a forum for ordinary people to voice their concerns. However, given the realities in most countries in the region, research and media observers confirm that there is a general feeling of scepticism and a belief that few, if any, sources seek to present the truth.

It is probably fair to say that expectations of the media across the region today among youth and adults alike — are in terms of what the media should *not* be. Those who think about the role of the media are likely to believe that the media should not be censored, should not be in the service of one party, nor should the media be corrupt or overly commercialised. In addition, these people may state that the media should be objective, accurate and reliable, even if they have limited experience of such sources. In practice, however, as several of the consulted media experts observed, for many it suffices that the media provide information that corresponds to their own views. It is only the very few who expect the media to develop into a truly independent voice that questions and analyses all events, issues, groups and individuals, and that helps citizens to develop the ability to think critically.

Credibility of the Media

Following the initial euphoria in the first years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, trust in the media generally declined across the region between 1993 and 2000. In 1993, for instance, about 87 per cent of young people in Poland had a great deal or some trust in domestic TV, 86 per cent in domestic radio and 79 per cent in the press, while in 1997 the number fell to 71 per cent of young people who had trust in the media in general. In Slovakia, trust among young people in TV and radio dropped from about 80 per cent in 1993 to 74 per cent in 1997, while in Latvia, there was a fall from about 75 per cent to 57 per cent over the same period.

The degree of trust in the media has also declined; fewer young people today place complete — as opposed to partial — trust in the media. While roughly 33 per cent of young Estonians had complete confidence in the media in 1993, that figure fell to nine per cent in 1997. In the Czech Republic, the percentage of those placing complete trust in the media shrank from 23 per cent to seven per cent over the same period.

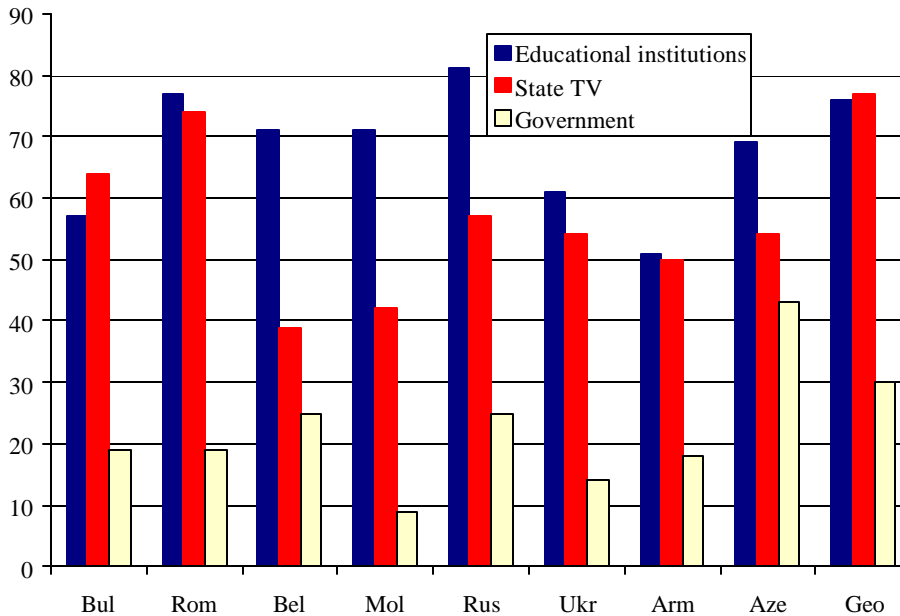
Nonetheless, the media did command some degree of trust among the majority of young people surveyed in 2000, especially relative to their trust in government institutions. Survey data show that young people seem to trust the media more than their countries' governments and parliaments. In Bulgaria and Romania, for example, 19 per cent of young people trusted the government fully or somewhat, compared with 64 per cent and 74 per cent respectively who placed trust in TV. In Russia, 25 per cent expressed trust in the government, versus 57 per cent who stated trust in TV (see table "Who do Young People Trust?" on the following page).

The majority of young people across the region believe that the private media will always be more objective than state media (see Table 15). According to 2000 surveys, 59 per cent of young people in Ukraine believed in the objectivity of private media, compared with 27 per cent who expressed scepticism. The percentage of young people who believed in the objectivity of private media was lowest in Uzbekistan (34 per cent) and highest in Georgia (77 per cent) and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (71 per cent). This implies that young people value the right to free expression, are aware of the power of governments to exercise control over the media, and are reluctant to put up with censorship.

At the same time, young people, especially older youth, recognize the constraints of the media and the economic and commercial pressures that are sometimes stronger than the pressure exerted by governments. Some young people base their judgments about the media on their own experiences or on the experiences of close friends and family. They say they can see for themselves that media accounts are sometimes biased or inaccurate, or that they try to push them to think or act in a certain way or to buy certain products. Others, usually better-educated young people, speak of a discrepancy between facts and their interpretations in the media, as well as of clear manipulation on the part of the media. (See Voices of Youth on Media on the UNICEF website www.unicef.org/voy.)

Who do Young People Trust?

(% of young people aged 15-24 who trust at least somewhat)



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

No particular medium seems to command a greater degree of trust than the others across the region. Overall, the press seems to be lagging behind TV and radio in many of the countries, although it is difficult to say whether this is a result of a decline in the quality of the press or simply a result of the decline in newspaper reading. In addition, young people generally link the independence of a source to its credibility. For example, in some of the countries, state TV is viewed as being under close government scrutiny to a larger extent than the other media, while in other places, TV emerges as the most credible source.

One medium that seems to be enjoying increasing levels of trust, however, is the Internet. In spite of the still relatively low use of the Internet in most of the countries, surveys show that a majority of young computer users consider most of the information on the web to be reliable. They particularly enjoy the large quantity of diverse information available on the Internet, and the possibility to surf the web and choose what interests them. Notably, the percentage of young people who trust most of the information on the Internet is higher than the percentage of those who actually use the web, a trend that implies a greater receptiveness toward the Internet among young people.

Quality of Journalism

One of the main reasons for scepticism toward the media among young people and adults alike is the widely recognized low quality of journalism across the region. As described above, in comparison to communist times, there has clearly been an enormous increase in the quantity of information available and the expression of different points of view. Indeed, focus groups across the region have described an “information boom” that has left many people feeling that they are relatively well informed and that they have access to differing views, as well as to professional and entertaining programming.

At the same time, however, audiences of all ages have become more sophisticated, more demanding and more critical of all types of media. Many recognize that the increase in information has not been accompanied by an increase in meaning or understanding. Rather, audiences feel the need to rely on a patchwork of sources in order to piece together an accurate and comprehensive picture of events.

Young people have certainly witnessed a sharp increase in the number of sources available, as well as some vast improvements in the professional quality of the media. However, they have also developed rising standards as to what constitutes reliable or high-quality information or entertainment. Perhaps even more than adults, young people are quick to reject programmes that appear unprofessional or old-fashioned and to be sceptical toward one-sided and politicised information.

The widespread disillusionment with the news media stems from the following shortcomings that currently plague journalism in much of the region:

- lack of independence: Truly independent or objective media are rare in the region; the reality is that the vast majority of sources are dependent upon political or financial sponsors. In addition, many journalists lack an understanding of the role of an independent media in society. They share “a belief that being critical of a government that is trying to establish democracy is equivalent to an attack on the democratic process itself,”⁷
- lack of investigative journalism: Probing journalism that attempts to question or uncover the truth about politics, government and commercial organizations is rare; instead, there is often pseudo-investigative reporting that may be driven by political motivations;
- politicisation of news reporting: There is frequently a preoccupation in the news media with political infighting, rivalries and scandals in news reporting, instead of analytical coverage based on facts and analysis;
- self-censorship: Although there is no longer any official censorship, journalists frequently practice self-censorship either out of fear, manipulation or the belief that it is better to stay on the side of the group in power;
- corruption: Unpaid and overworked, many journalists are susceptible to bribery, threats and political pressure and end up “being little more than the hired pens”⁸ for the public figures who pay them;

- sensationalisation: The media features increasing amounts of sensationalist information — accidents, crime, tragedies, scandals, gossip —in order to attract audiences and advertisers;
- commercialisation: There has been an increase in banal entertainment fare, especially on the new private commercial stations, in order to attract a populace tired by the stress and drudgery of daily life, as well as advertisers;
- foreign influence: There has also been a growing reliance on imported foreign television programming (i.e., American serials, Latin American soap operas) which stifles the development of domestic television production, along with the imitation of many things Western. In addition, most private media is either fully or partly owned by foreigners, or is dependent on foreign subsidies;
- provincialism of local media: A lack of resources, training and professional experience keeps local media largely provincial in style and substance and limits its potential audiences;
- lack of contextual knowledge: Journalists throughout the region often lack knowledge and understanding of the history, background and implications of many current international, economic and geopolitical news stories;
- inexperience and incompetence of journalists: Many journalists are young and inexperienced and have not received well-grounded training in the basics of objective news selection and reporting. They are also easily swayed by political pressures;
- limited scope for public debate: In each country there seem to be some major issues that are often ignored or glossed over, with only one side being represented (for example, entry into NATO or economic crime);
- over-reliance on few sources: Most media seem to rely on the same few sources of news — their local and regional press agencies, official government statements, etc;
- lack of self-criticism: The media does not discuss its own problems, which limits its ability to overcome its shortcomings and to strengthen democracy.

Young People's Interests

As might be expected, young people most often seek entertainment from all the media they follow. They tune in to television for films, music shows, game shows, soap operas and series, sports events, fashion/lifestyle programmes, etc. They tune in to radio to listen to their favourite types of music. They use computers and the Internet primarily to use e-mail and chat with their friends, to download software and music, and to play games. Their main interests in newspapers and magazines centre on celebrities, rock groups, sports, fashion, horoscopes and crosswords.

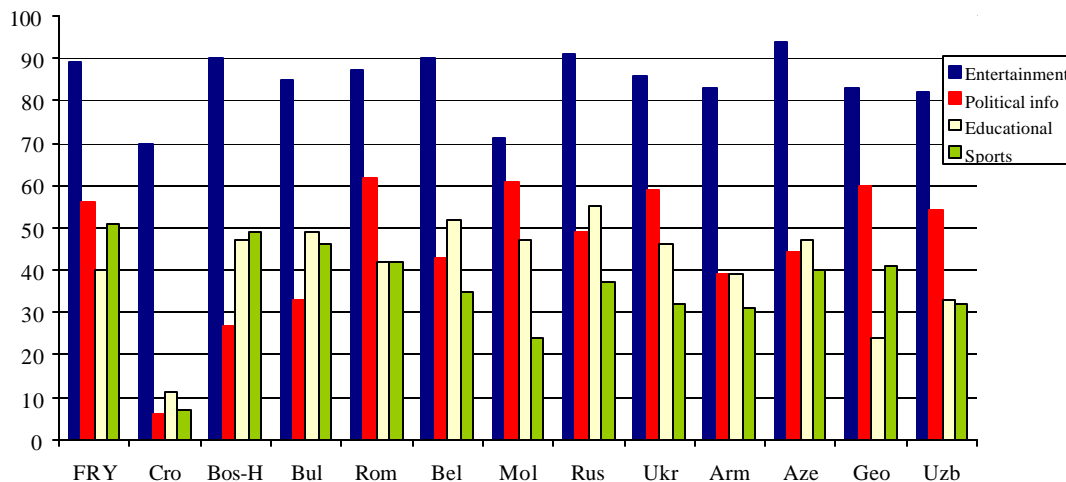
Survey data from across the region on favourite types of TV programming show a strong preference for entertainment among both young people and adults. As the following table on TV programming interests shows, 80-90 per cent of young people in many of the countries prefer to watch entertainment programmes on TV. However, the same trend can be seen among older people; the majority of adults across the region express a preference for entertainment over any other programming as well. In this sense,

the growing predilection for entertainment can be viewed as a trend that has been sweeping across societies, rather than as a trend confined to young people.

However, it is noteworthy that in many countries, political information and educational programmes are also high in the ranking of preferred TV fare. For example, 2000 survey data showed that young people in FR Yugoslavia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Georgia and Uzbekistan identified political information as their second top choice of television topics, over sports and various types of practical information (i.e., self-help information, advertising, traffic and weather reports, etc.). Educational programming was the second choice among young people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Belarus and Russia.

TV Programming Interests

"What kind of programming is most important to you?"
(% of young people 15-24 mentioning as important)



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Young People's Interest in Politics

Given the strong preference for entertainment media among young people throughout the region, along with their scepticism toward the news media and the adult world of politics, it would seem easy to point to the apathy of today's youth. Adults in these countries certainly tend to do so when comparing the current generation to previous generations of young people. Some of the experts consulted for this study also point out that many young people today simply do not have time to be interested in politics because of the financial difficulties they have to cope with on a daily basis. Nevertheless, research does not indicate that young people in the region are particularly apathetic.

Studies on young people and the media in Western Europe and the United States have shown that young people's expression of disinterest in politics is often superficial and "part of the condition of being a child," which actually increases with age and cognitive development.⁹ For many adolescents, "cynical chic" is a way of dealing with their own sense of powerlessness and challenging "what they perceive as inconsistency,

complacency or hypocrisy on the part of adults — and not only politicians.”¹⁰ Thus, while many young people will say that politics is “boring,” at the same time they will be capable of discussing quite sophisticated political issues. Researchers have drawn a distinction between cynicism and apathy and have even argued that “cynicism may in fact be a necessary prerequisite for certain forms of political activity.”¹¹

In this respect, young people in former communist countries would seem to be no different from those in other parts of the world. In addition, having grown up during a period of major political and socioeconomic change, one could argue that they are probably more in tune with political issues and developments than the average young person in more developed countries, even if they are extremely turned off by party politics and by the scandals, corruption and infighting among individual political figures and groups.

Indeed, existing survey data from most countries in the region disprove the notion of youth apathy. The percentage of young people who show interest in their countries’ political developments is either higher than or equal to the percentage of those who are not interested (see Table 17). In Azerbaijan, for example, 64 per cent of young people declared an interest in political developments in 2000, compared with 36 per cent who said they were not interested. In Poland, 65 per cent showed an interest in 1997, compared with 34 per cent who did not. In addition, research shows that the attitudes and behaviour of young people most often mirror those of adults, making youth an integral part of the life of their societies, rather than a separate group. Young people can also be a driving force of social and political change, as was recently the case in FR Yugoslavia. However, just like adults, young people tend to show stronger interest in domestic political developments in times of general turmoil, then lose interest as the situation stabilizes.

Survey data also support the idea that young people are interested in politics in the broad sense of policies and their effect on society, while they are far less interested in the world of party politics (see Table 16). In Russia, for example, 56 per cent of young people said they were interested in “domestic political developments” in 2000, but only 28 per cent stated an interest in politics per se. In Estonia in 1997, 76 per cent of youth were interested in political developments, and only 39 per cent cared about politics. The same pattern is noticeable in attitudes among the older generation. The fact that younger and older people alike across the region are tired of politics and are more interested in how events and issues will affect their lives is not surprising. In the past decade, they have witnessed numerous examples of inefficient and corrupt leadership, and they have seen politics turn into a tool for personal enrichment.

The political and economic developments in the past ten years may also account for the lack of interest in and scepticism shown towards the development of democratic institutions. For many young people in the region, adverse developments such as unemployment and plummeting living standards have come to outweigh the greater freedoms gained after the fall of communism. Others are simply overwhelmed by everyday problems. Researchers and experts in and on the region often note that a decline in belief in democratic institutions is common among both young people and adults; fewer and fewer people believe in the effectiveness of political participation and of civic activities.

Media Aimed at Young People

Young people in Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States and the Baltic States appear to have a variety of sources to choose from. According to the media experts and young people consulted during this study, in most countries there are entertaining television programmes broadcast at convenient times, before and after school for younger children, and later in the evening for older children and teenagers. Much of this programming is lively and dynamic, featuring music, fashion, sports, games and celebrity news. There are programmes that attempt to have open and frank discussions on youth-related issues such as family relationships, love, sex, drugs, school, alienation, etc., although they do so with varying degrees of depth and sincerity. Several of the countries have their own musical channels modelled on MTV, which are extremely popular. There are some educational programs which, compared with the slick entertainment shows, are often perceived as dull and outdated. They are generally not broadcast at the most convenient times, which virtually guarantees them smaller audiences.

In most countries in the region, and particularly in the urban areas, there are usually several music radio stations that young people enjoy listening to. These stations often feature lively disc jockeys, a variety of pop music, contests, humour, listener call-ins, and sometimes headline news.

While the daily youth press has virtually disappeared throughout the region, there are numerous specialized weekly or monthly publications aimed at children and adolescents. Many of these focus on news from the entertainment industry, fashion, sports and games. Some discuss a variety of youth issues, although, once again, not always in a particularly meaningful manner. There are also some high-quality specialized magazines on computers, business, film and music, but they are too expensive for most young people to afford on a regular basis.

What characterises most media for young people is dynamic production, fast pace, a lot of music, informal style and language, and an overall stress on entertainment as opposed to education. The consulted experts and young people note that youth media usually stresses how to look good, be successful and have fun with friends. They observe that these forms of media address young people as fans, followers, consumers and users rather than creators or active participants. Such media aims to be appealing and to attract both audiences and advertisers. While youth-oriented media often contains educational elements, in contrast to the past, there are no longer programmes or publications that specifically aim to socialise youth, as the communist media did.

Many young people appear to be relatively satisfied with the available youth-targeted media. They find that these sources are entertaining and address many of their interests and concerns — such as AIDS, sex, drugs, computers, fashion, music, etc. — some of which they may not be comfortable discussing openly with adults. Young people value the information available in the media in this respect, as well as the advice provided by both their peers and experts. As one 17-year-old girl from Barnaul, Russia wrote recently on UNICEF's Voice of Youth website: (www.unicef.org/voy):

I think that now mass media offers wider and more interesting coverage of the lives of teenagers. I do not feel that mass media treats me like a child; it treats me like a person who can think and defend his rights and be free from: "Do it like this and there will be no mistake!"

There is a strong preference, however, for youth-oriented material, especially on sensitive topics, that is prepared and presented by young people themselves. Young people in focus groups and on UNICEF's Voice of Youth website have expressed their belief that only young journalists know and understand their problems. Similarly, when adults discuss youth issues in the media, these young people feel that they either miss the point or present the issues in a way that is too serious, pedantic and patronising.

Portrayal of Young People in the Media

Young people who are less satisfied with the media voice two main complaints. First, they feel that the media does not pay sufficient attention to them, especially compared to the past. Apart from programmes specially designed for youth, young people feel underrepresented. According to a young journalist from Younpress in Moscow, in Russia the amount of programming for children has shrunk from 25 per cent of overall television fare before 1989 to just five per cent today. Media experts agree that the main problem with the portrayal of young people in the media is that they are simply not discussed or pictured very much at all.

Young people's second complaint about the media is that when they are featured, they are usually stereotyped. The media tends to offer both positive and negative stereotypes. Among the latter are young people who are drug addicts, criminals, derelicts, street children, or victims of disease, abuse, crime or tragedy. The positive images of young people in the media tend to be either the well-off, trend-setting cool kids or the talented young achievers in school, sports, computers, art, fashion, film, etc. These positive images depict young people in a very optimistic way, as the future, as people with energy who can do a lot, as a well-informed and self-assured generation that is growing up and managing to cope with the world.

Media experts and youth consulted for this study explain that the problem for most young people is that they do not recognize themselves in the media; either they feel they could never attain the ideal of the hip or successful young person, or they feel left out. The ordinary young person, with the usual problems and concerns, living a typical life with its routine ups and downs, does not find him/herself represented in the extreme versions of youth depicted in the media. As a 17-year-old from Moscow stated on UNICEF's Voices of Youth website (www.unicef.org/voy):

Meet our young people! These are the children of rich parents, who are able to afford many things for themselves and these are the malicious criminals who society does not need at all(!). Those who do not belong to both "trends," who keep their balance between these extremes, are left out. Those ordinary schoolchildren and students who simply go to school, who simply go to the night clubs, who simply try to solve the problems of their society, who simply go shopping, who simply see their boyfriends and

girlfriends, who simply read good books, who simply listen to good music, who simply watch good videos, who simply live. Is it necessary to belong to one of the categories that mass media divide us into? Is it true that I will never be able to read about ordinary young people like me in newspapers and magazines? Oh, they are too "simple"?! Of course, it is necessary to shock the reading and viewing public with extremes. Maybe it is necessary to pay attention to real youth, not to those stereotypes invented by mass media, which apply only to a definite part of the "Cola" generation.

Quality of Media Aimed at Young People

While young people certainly have greater choice in today's media environments compared with those under communism, the quality and content of media targeting youth have started to raise concerns. Although worries about the effects of TV violence on children or of heavy marketing strategies aimed at young people may not still be as pronounced as those in the West, growing numbers of parents, educators, researchers and policy-makers in the region are questioning what young people have increasingly been exposed to.

The main issue for critics of the media is not so much the greater variety of programmes available to young people today, but rather the quality of these programmes. The majority of such programmes, critics claim, offer poor-quality entertainment, mostly soap operas, TV series and game shows, etc. Material featuring sex, violence, intolerance or greed is also widely available to young people, even if it is not intended for youth audiences.

Domestic production is either rare due to the high costs involved in producing locally as opposed to importing inexpensive foreign productions (such as soap operas or serials from Latin America or the United States), or, where it does exist, it is often a copy of Western programmes. This imitation concerns both the programme genres, such as talk shows and game shows, but also behaviour in front of the camera, including gestures, intonation and even language. Such productions, however, enjoy wide appeal among youth audiences.

Researchers and media experts from the region point out not only the emphasis on entertainment, but also the almost total absence of educational programmes, in sharp contrast to the prevalent youth-oriented programming under communism. They claim that the few educational programs that do exist are outdated and dull, making it hard for them to compete for young people's attention.

Media critics question whether the greater number of programmes available today does indeed translate into greater diversity of ideas and true choice for audiences. They point out that for all of its faults, the communist media tried to offer a variety of programme genres to children and youth, such as documentaries; current affairs shows; educational programmes on nature, science and travel; and cultural programmes on art, history and literature. They also tried to shield young people from harmful content. Even if these programmes had to meet censors' approval and reflect a communist value system

and world view, critics suggest that such programmes may have provided a broader and more wholesome perspective on life than much of the slick, commercialised entertainment fare that dominates today.

The fact that the quality of media for children and youth is of growing concern in the region today is partly explained by the decline in parental supervision over children's media consumption habits. Many parents are busier and have to work harder today than in the past, leaving them less time to be involved in their children's lives and activities. In addition, in societies where the state once assumed the role of knowing what was best for children to watch, listen to or read, parents are unaccustomed to being responsible for regulating their children's media consumption. Parents often seem to be unable to grasp the growing role of the media and are unprepared to face the problems and responsibilities that a greater choice involves. Children and teenagers thus get to watch programming that may not be appropriate or intended for them.

The Influence of Media on Young People

Young people and adults alike recognize that the media can have both a positive and negative influence on their attitudes and behaviour. As a positive influence, the media helps young people understand and adapt to the world in which they live and to connect with their peers from different countries. The media provide information about other cultures and other people, thus destroying stereotypes and widening young people's outlook on the world. The media is also seen as an important potential factor in the promotion of tolerance and understanding and access to diverse opinions. Most recently, in FR Yugoslavia, the Czech Republic and Ukraine, for example, the media has played a significant role in attracting young people to support opposition movements. Young people say that the media provides them with knowledge about events, and with facts that make them think about life.

At the same time, young people speak of the power of the media to influence their lifestyle and behaviour, as well as the media's practice of distorting or withholding facts in order to manipulate views. Judging from their own experience, young people recognize that the media often presents an image of trendy and fun-loving youth, while in reality, many young people are experiencing serious problems. Media researchers, on the other hand, speak of the ability of the media to discourage social participation, either by promoting apathy and detachment or by feeding young people a steady diet of trivial content.

Just how much the mass media is influencing young people, and in what ways, is debatable. Sociologists and researchers from the region note that the entertainment media in particular is playing an increasing role in influencing young people's sense of identity, style, values and attitudes. As an Uzbek sociologist explained:

The entertainment mass media has great influence on the behaviour and lives of youth. That which was once only "Western life" has come to Uzbekistan, as well as to other countries of the CIS. With the right amount of money, it is possible to buy practically anything that is fashionable and popular today in the West. It is precisely the entertainment mass media

*that serves as the bearer of and conduit for this new lifestyle and values; it pushes youth to a new identification of themselves through the consumption of Western goods.*¹²

Researchers also observe that the media tends to have greater influence on the less-educated, more rural and isolated youth, and less influence on the more educated, sophisticated and urban youth, who may have the ability to critically evaluate and select from the media they are exposed to. In general, the influence of entertainment media has grown while other traditional sources of influence have diminished, namely, family, school, community, friends and religion.

TV, lifestyle and fashion magazines and Internet chat rooms are all providing more and more material for young people to imitate. There is a newly found fascination with glamour and celebrities that did not exist a decade ago, at least not to the same degree. In fact, the whole notion of a celebrity culture is relatively new to the region. For many young people, this is an escape from a rather drab everyday life and a vicarious way of experiencing things that many will never have in their lives.

One sign of a growing celebrity culture is that young people are increasingly choosing celebrities—popular singers, musicians, models, athletes, actors, etc.—as their role models. In contrast with the past, what many youth value today is personal achievement, fame and fortune, rather than one's contribution to society. Sociologists from the region acknowledge the appeal of individualism, which was stifled during communism. However, they regret that today's individualism is mingled with a great degree of selfishness and an aspiration to get on in life regardless of what it may involve.

Several of the sociologists and media experts from the region who were consulted for this analysis commented on the media's contribution to confusion in values among many young people today. They attribute this confusion at least in part to the following:

- a loss of a sense of one's own national culture;
- a misguided understanding of right and wrong, of human relations, of reality;
- promotion of the idea of life as a spectacle;
- decreased emphasis on creativity, art, culture and active social participation; and
- the bombardment of trivial, banal content.¹³

This confusion in values can be illustrated by a recent survey in Varna, Bulgaria's third largest city. The study showed that two of the countries' classical writers were cited among young people's positive role models alongside a soccer player and an entertainer.¹⁴ In a similar survey in Slovenia, the U.S. actress-model Pamela Anderson emerged as the number one choice of role models.¹⁵

The Bulgarian survey also illustrated the agenda-setting function of the media among young people. When asked to identify the biggest problems facing youth, the young people surveyed named AIDS, drugs, etc. However, parallel research showed that none of these problems posed serious health-related risks to the young people in the

Varna region. As the respondents said that they do not discuss AIDS, sex and drugs with their parents, the conclusion of the researchers was that the young people were in fact citing problems that had been identified and addressed in the media, instead of looking for cases in their everyday lives. While this is an example of the media promoting a noble cause, it also points to the potential of the media to influence the way young people think and to undermine their ability to think for themselves.

Socially sophisticated young people appear to be highly aware of the pervasiveness and potential influence of the media. They see that the media is everywhere and that its messages are difficult to disregard, as a 16-year-old Slovak girl recently expressed on UNICEF's Voices of Youth website: (www.unicef.org/voy):

I think it is clear that the media has become inevitable nowadays. We cannot imagine our life without it; it is a means of communication between individuals and the world. But the media is useful for those people who can use it properly, who can develop their knowledge, create their own opinions and personalities using it. Media brings people entertainment and relaxation. Think of all the people who relax after work or school by watching TV, listening to the radio or surfing on websites. But it is bad if a TV-set, PC or the Internet is your only friend; then you become a slave of the media explosion. Then the media has a different impact on people. For example, soap operas turn us into naive people living in illusions, and when the soap operas are over, we can find out that real life is different and that we are becoming more pessimistic and reserved. Young people particularly should be aware of this danger and think and think about it, because they are the future of the world, they create the world that is becoming more artificial and dangerous. Let's protect the world from the bad influence of media and start with ourselves.

Young People and the Internet

Focus groups and interviews with young people and adults across the region for this and other recent studies reveal a strong consensus that most young people are attracted to the Internet, potentially at least, and that they show a real curiosity and thirst for the web. At the same time, the information divide that exists among young people is most obvious in terms of access to the web. Both qualitative and quantitative research has shown that Internet users are better-off, better-educated and urban. In this sense, the information divide is a reflection of the economic differentiation in these societies rather than a matter of a conscious choice on the part of young people. Of course, this is not to say that personal characteristics do not matter. Internet users are generally more curious about trying out new things and more keen on being part of the world community.

Computer and Internet access and use are rising in all the countries of the region, though not at the same pace, as they are largely dependent on each nation's financial resources and infrastructure. Some countries are well ahead, while others have just started, yet the trend points clearly upwards. Young people are more interested and more eager to take advantage of technological developments than adults. In most of the countries, the number of young people with access to a computer is higher than that of

adults. In Belarus, for example, 45 per cent of young people had used a computer compared to 13 per cent of adults in 2000. In Azerbaijan, 24 per cent of young people had used a computer versus six per cent of adults (see Table 14).

In terms of Internet use, an average of 13 per cent of young people across the region use the web, compared to four per cent of adults. According to 2000 survey data, the difference between young people's and adults' use of the Internet was widest in Romania and Bulgaria. In Romania, 25 per cent of young people had used the Internet, compared with three per cent of adults. In Bulgaria, the figures stood at 25 per cent and five per cent respectively (see Table 13).

Data from 2000 also revealed a clear gender divide in terms of Internet use; young men are far more likely to use the web than young women. In Ukraine, for example, 3.2 per cent of young males used the Internet daily compared with 0.5 per cent of young females. In Azerbaijan, the figures were 2.7 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively (see Table 24).

In some countries — Hungary, Estonia and Slovenia — the governments have made substantial investments in providing Internet links. In Hungary, the Schoolnet program has supplied secondary schools with computers and Internet access. A 1998 survey showed that nearly two-thirds of 15-24-year-olds are computer literate. In Slovenia, almost all schools are wired. In 1997, 68 per cent of the students in upper secondary schools had some computer knowledge. Schools account for almost half of all Internet users in Slovenia.¹⁶

According to a recent study commissioned by Eesti Telefon, approximately 13 per cent of Estonians use the Internet on a regular basis. That places Estonia at number 15 in the world for per capita usage, higher than many post-industrial countries in Western Europe.¹⁷

Meanwhile, the level of computer literacy is much lower among young people in a number of other countries. In Moldova, only half of secondary schools offer computer classes and possess computer equipment. In Azerbaijan in 1997, only one-quarter of secondary schools had computer facilities, and the distribution ranged from 15 per cent in rural schools to 49 per cent in urban schools. In Georgia, the number of secondary schools equipped with computers declined from 438 in 1990 to 245 in 1998.¹⁸

Nevertheless, even in the countries where Internet and computer use is low, it seems that young people are actively seeking access. The number of young people using computers at Internet cafés and other places, for example, is much higher than that of adults, although Internet cafés and free access in schools and libraries are not as widespread as in Western Europe. Young people are enthusiastic about the Internet as a medium that, even more than TV, helps them establish contact with the outside world. Moreover, it is a medium that allows them to freely seek the information they are interested in.

Like young people all over the world, the youth in the region use the Internet for e-mail, chatrooms, downloading computer games and music, and getting information about education, entertainment and sports. In times of crises, however, as the conflict in

FR Yugoslavia showed, young people turn to the Internet both to be informed and to tell their stories to the world.

In light of the relatively low use of the Internet in many of the countries in the region, the level of trust in the web is surprisingly high (see Table 19). The percentage of young people who trust the Internet is higher than the percentage of those who actually use it. In fact, the majority of young people believe that most of the information on the web is reliable. This could, of course, be a result of the general optimism and the substantial publicity surrounding the Internet. Whatever the reason, however, young people are obviously recognizing the potential of the web to allow them to freely choose the information they like. However, this raises the issue of appropriate education that would enable young people to distinguish between credible and unreliable information on the Internet.

Some of the existing problems with regard to Internet access in the region may be more difficult to overcome than similar problems in the West. On the one hand, governments in some countries are already making attempts to centralise and regulate access to the Internet (as in Kazakhstan, where lawmakers recently approved new restrictions on Internet use and on the amount of foreign programming allowed on television and radio¹⁹). On the other hand, with economic globalisation, many of the countries in the region will inevitably feel the clout of commercial forces that are already shaping the terms of access to and use of the Internet. Individual countries and organizations will need substantial support in order to ensure free web access and the development of non-commercial uses of the Internet in the future.

Internet Youth Culture and Entrepreneurs

The researchers and media experts who contributed to this study largely agreed that the Internet does seem to contribute to a certain youth culture, though among a relatively small group of young people. This includes a new way of life in terms of spending time, mostly chatting, surfing, downloading music, software or games, and socialising in cyberspace. Research in this area is still lacking, but anecdotal evidence suggests that young people who use the web regularly are developing their own vocabulary and particular ethics, as well as a sense of superiority and privilege, and of being more advanced and modern than their peers.

According to the consulted researchers and media experts, the Internet entrepreneurs in the region are mostly experienced, very active and educated young people, usually slightly older (22+), who may have had experience overseas and/or with foreign organizations. The world of professional opportunities is still small due to economic factors and lingering state control over telecommunications, but it is growing fast. Obviously, there are more opportunities in those countries that are further along in the transition process, such as Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia.

In these countries, the Internet is already a source of employment for young people, although still on a smaller scale than in Western Europe and the United States. In other countries, the Internet business is still nascent, but according to the literature and experts consulted for this study, there are broad expectations that it will take off in the near future, at least once Internet access becomes more widely available. Increasing

numbers of both local and foreign companies in many countries are employing web designers and developers, and most of the time they are turning to young people to fill these positions.

Internet Non-Users

In spite of the obvious interest and curiosity on the part of young people, the vast majority still do not have access to computers or the Internet. As mentioned, the reasons for this are mostly economic. Buying a computer and securing a web connection are still big investments in most of these countries. In addition, poor infrastructure puts young people living in smaller towns and villages at a disadvantage. Technical problems, such as low speed, also discourage wide Internet use in some countries and do not allow young people to fully appreciate all the possibilities that the web offers.

Apart from these economic considerations, there are also young people who shy away from the Internet because of the prevalence of English-language content, or the absence of content in their own languages. There are others who are not particularly interested, or who consider the Internet to be a waste of time. This attitude, however, could well be a result of insufficient information about the Internet and its uses and possibilities. In all likelihood — as all experts consulted for this analysis agree — once non-users are provided with access or educated in the potential and use of computers, they will soon become users.

Still other young people have voiced legitimate concerns about Internet usage, observing that their peers who use the web seem to be growing more detached from them, as if living in their own world. These concerns, as well as the issues of pornography, intolerance and racism promoted on web sites, reflect problems similar to those experienced with Internet use in the West.

State of Journalism Training

In spite of all the problems of low-quality and unprofessional media cited earlier, many young people in the region are attracted to journalism as a career. They see journalism as a dynamic, interesting, high-prestige career with the opportunity to be well known, to earn money and to learn new technologies and ways of communicating. It seems that there are just as many young people entering the profession to gain fame and fortune as to develop professionally and contribute to society. In contrast with the past, loyalty to the government is no longer a criterion for working as a journalist throughout most of the region. In countries that still have controlled media environments, however, such as in Central Asia, young people entering the journalistic profession must share (or at least not oppose) the basic goals and policies of the state.

There have been some major changes in the way in which a young person in the region becomes a journalist today. Under communism, there was a formal system of studying at a journalism faculty within a university. Some of the courses were highly ideological and theoretical (such as “Scientific Communism,” “Atheism,” “History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union” and “Marxist-Leninist Philosophy”). Little emphasis was placed on practical training and there was no need to learn about

journalism ethics, management, public relations or advertising. Nor was there any need to study or understand audience requirements or tastes, since journalism served to promote communist values and thinking.

Today, while many young people study journalism at university, there are several ways to learn about and enter the profession. A young person with an interest in and talent for writing can study other subjects at university (such as philology or economics/finance) and then go on to train on the job at a newspaper or TV or radio station. Private institutes that teach journalism courses have also sprung up in some countries, and various media outlets offer their own training programmes. International media and non-governmental organizations, such as Internews, the Soros Foundation's Open Society Institute, IREX, ProMedia, the BBC, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty and Voice of America, also provide various types of training in journalism writing, production, management or law. The very exposure to various foreign media provides a certain element of training, and some young people may have the opportunity to travel abroad to train with foreign media organizations as well.

Journalism training today tries to offer a new approach that emphasizes news selection, objective reporting and audience appeal. There are also courses in how to manage a newspaper or TV or radio station, along with courses in advertising. Young people usually have to go through a fair amount of practical training before they become full-time journalists.

On the whole, however, media experts across the region agree that the quality of journalism training is very low, and is a major impediment to the development of healthy democratic media in many countries. Although some young people manage to receive decent journalistic training, and some very able and talented journalists do exist, for the most part training is inadequate and unsystematic.

One major problem with journalism training is that there are few qualified teachers of journalism and no training of journalism teachers. Some of the best journalists end up leaving their countries for better opportunities elsewhere. Many of those teaching journalism were trained under the old system, are relatively inexperienced in modern journalistic techniques, or have knowledge based on foreign experience that does not always translate well into the existing reality. In some countries, there are also no textbooks in the local languages to replace those that were used under communism.

The reality of working in the media can also turn out to be very different from what young people may have expected. Training and job opportunities may be scarce, causing most young people to enter the field with insufficient training and experience. In addition, the pay is generally so low that few young people can afford to work as journalists. The result is that many are forced to leave the profession, resulting in a very high turnover in the journalistic field.

Young People and Development of Democratic, Independent Media

When discussing the young people of former communist countries, adults and outside observers are often quick to say that — compared with their own age group — they are a self-interested generation that cares primarily about looking good, having fun and making money. They also believe that this young generation is too passive to push for or implement any significant change, especially regarding the highly powerful and politicised media.

Indeed, apart from some youth movements in different countries in the region, the first generation to reach adulthood since the fall of the Berlin Wall could hardly be described as rebellious. After all, these people did not have to fight for the freedoms that they currently enjoy and that their parents did not. On the other hand, they have come to enjoy their choices and privileges and have a good understanding of what the past was like both from their families and from plenty of information about life under communism. It is clear that they do not want to return to the past.

Young people across the region today — to varying degrees — have seen and understood the power and importance of the media to bring about political and social changes. Just because they prefer to listen to FM pop music stations and watch entertainment programs on TV does not mean that they are not aware of the role of the media behind the rise of opposition groups as well as the fall of public figures. (In the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in particular, young people saw official media function as a propagandistic tool, promoting war, ethnic intolerance and hate speech. They also saw the advantages of the independent media and its greater credibility in times of political conflict.)

Young people, as an important engine behind changes in political and social life, as well as in styles and trends, are likely to push for a strengthening of democratic and independent media in their countries, although they are likely to do so in their own way. Perhaps precisely because they are self-centred, they will push for the media to respond to their needs and demands for choice, variety, and insight into how things are done elsewhere. They are also likely to push for real discussion of and accurate information on the very real problems they face — from unemployment and poor education to drug and alcohol abuse, from child prostitution to HIV/AIDS. Information obtained through the Internet will also raise their expectations as to the quality of information that mass media provides. In addition, young people may push for the media to be more successful and profitable, so that they will have more opportunities to work in the field of journalism.

Thus, in the end, young people may eventually push for a strengthening of democratic and independent media, but not necessarily for democracy's sake. This push for change may take a while, however, so long as the entertainment media more or less satisfies young people's tastes and interests, and so long as the economies of many of these countries remain depressed.

Directions for Research, Policy Reform and Programming

While the long-term development of independent, democratic media in the CEE/CIS and Baltic States region will surely require the demands and involvement of young people, it will also need a lot more in terms of financial support, research, policy reforms and programmes. Local, national and international bodies have an opportunity to ensure that the media in these countries in transition is used to serve the public — to inform, educate, entertain and uplift all its citizens: men and women of all ages, socioeconomic backgrounds, and ethnic and religious groups. Indeed, in these countries where rapid changes have created confusion over the very role of the media, it is important that governmental and non-governmental organizations invest in the development of responsible and responsive media, as well as media-savvy consumers able to discern information manipulated for political or commercial ends.

It is also important that the countries in the region follow the measures that have been taken by other countries to protect the rights of young people in media coverage, to ensure young people's access to diverse and high-quality information, and to help young people have a voice in the mass media, as specified in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.²⁰ By the same token, these steps would also serve to strengthen the overall journalistic profession and the quality of the media in these societies, along with democracy and civil rights.

The implications of the research conducted for this paper must be addressed by policy-makers, civil society organizations, development partners, international agencies, media and youth groups. Specific directions needed to shape media that adequately reflect, educate, protect, involve and empower young people include the following:

Education and Training of Young People

- regular, systematic and high-quality training in solid, professional journalism skills: writing, editing, use of equipment, selection of newsworthy material, interviewing, delivery, etc.;
- specialized journalism training, such as in financial, investigative and human rights reporting;
- training in management of a newspaper, TV or radio station;
- training in Internet use and web programming and development;
- education and training in journalism ethics;
- teaching in principles of democracy, free speech and objective journalism;
- increasing young people's awareness of their own rights to participate in the media and to be heard, especially on issues affecting them;
- educational programmes on media literacy — how to develop critically minded consumers of information and entertainment (for example, the media literacy curriculum developed for primary and secondary schools in Slovenia).

Professional Support and Development for Young People

- more initiatives to increase the participation of young people in the media, such as the establishment of children's or young people's pages in newspapers, the appointment

of youth correspondents, the creation of youth magazines, or the production of special TV and radio programmes by youth for youth;

- creation of stable career opportunities in the media;
- support of young people's media groups, especially independent and alternative groups that could not otherwise survive;
- creation of formal and informal groups of young people involved in the media (TV, radio, Internet, press) for the purpose of meetings, exchanges of ideas and information, and professional networking;
- establishment of more regular exchange programmes to provide opportunities to observe and work in journalism in other societies, and to give journalists the skills to teach journalism upon their return to their home countries.

Financial Support for Equipment and Internet Access

- support for and promotion of the development of the independent media including training, technical and logistical assistance;
- support for Internet access through public schools and libraries;
- provision of cheap credit for buying computers;
- provision of free Internet access for minority, poor and disabled young people;
- provision of free video cameras for young journalists in training;
- support for well-equipped studios where young people can learn to use modern technologies.

Journalism Policies, Programs and Regulations

- training for journalists in human rights, including children's rights issues;
- promotion of a more active role for journalists to encourage reconciliation and mutual understanding, and to fight intolerance and xenophobia, including among young people;
- education for journalists and editors on how they can communicate about and with children and young people;
- development of guidelines to protect children from information injurious to their well-being;
- development of professional journalistic codes of ethics on how children and young people should be covered in the media (for example, to avoid stereotypes, gender bias, use of derogatory terms, manipulation and sensationalism);
- development of ethical codes and compliance with self-regulatory mechanisms by journalists and their associations, thus assisting impartial reporting;
- laws that establish and protect the independence of journalists and editors who are increasingly under threat from political and commercial interests;
- establishment of media watchdog groups;
- creation of media to serve minority groups and children who are victims of armed conflict or in emergency situations.

Research and Evaluation

- more research and public discussion on how young people can be involved in and benefit from the Information Revolution;
- research into how various media (press, TV, cinema, music, advertising, etc.) influence children and youth, as well as the nature and degree of that influence;
- research into the conditions of protection, distribution, sale and consumption of media intended for young people;
- research into the amount, nature and effect of both harmful messages (for example, relating to hatred, intolerance, pornography, substance abuse, and violence) and educational material in the media targeted at young people;
- evaluation of the success and impact of media projects targeted to and/or involving young people;
- evaluation of programmes aimed at increasing Internet access for young people of different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds in urban and rural settings.

Media Projects Involving Young People

The general sense from the young people and adults consulted for this study, who work in or with the media in the region is that there are growing opportunities for young people to get involved in the media, but that these opportunities are somewhat sporadic, have limited impact on the general audience and are mostly confined to large cities. Most of these opportunities are provided by international organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Some local press and TV and radio stations do offer young people opportunities for participation, yet few seem to get involved. Sometimes young people are given the opportunity to work in the media as part of their practical training as journalists with local or foreign employers.

At the same time, young people who do get involved in media training projects find these experiences extremely useful in preparing them for professional work. The projects promote media professionalism at a time when the societies of these countries are trying to establish a new model for journalistic training. The projects also highlight the creative potential of young people and demonstrate that the media can be used as an educational and, ultimately, a positive social force.

The comments of the young journalists involved in some of these projects show that they take them seriously and responsibly and that they are indeed interested in contributing to solving societal problems. They also instinctively understand the need for young people to be heard through their own voices and on their own terms.

For a descriptive list of many examples of projects involving young people in the region, see Appendix 2.

Support for a Youth Media Network

Media-savvy young people throughout the region would be very interested in communicating through various media channels with other such young people in their own country, in neighbouring countries and/or in Western countries. In fact, they are

doing so already, especially through the Internet, and as one Ukrainian journalist observed, “with more access, more will be doing it.”

Part of young people’s interest stems from the excitement of using new technologies, part comes from wanting to share experiences — personal and professional — with their counterparts in other countries, and part comes from wanting to learn new viewpoints, new ideas and new ways of doing things. The March 2001 Voices of Youth chat room on the subject of youth and media with UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy provided evidence of the thirst for sharing experiences, as well as the sheer fun of communicating with young people from other countries.

In some countries, especially those further along in their transition, there may be a preference for communicating with young people from the West out of a belief that they can learn more from more advanced societies. In addition, there is the obstacle of knowing a common language, which is generally English or Russian.

However, young people who have felt isolated, either because of the size of their country (Slovenia), their economic struggles (Central Asia, Southeastern Europe), or their recent political history (e.g. The Balkans), surely have a common interest in communicating with, sharing with and learning from their peers in other countries. As a media analyst from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia stated:

Many young people grew up in an atmosphere of isolation from the world, which they were sentenced to by the former Serbian regime and the Western world. Their parents grew up in a spirit of openness to the world, and the wish to reintegrate into the international community and share its achievements is very present, especially among the urban and educated young population.²¹

ENDNOTES:

¹ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (including the UN-administered province of Kosovo), Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.

² Survey data in this paper refer to youth aged 15-24, unless otherwise indicated. However, the overall analysis attempts to address young people in the broader age range of 10-24.

³ UNICEF, “Young People in Changing Societies”, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, 2000, p. xi.

⁴ Jovanka Matic, Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade; Dubravka Valic-Nedeljkovic, Novi Sad Journalistic School, Novi Sad; Radoslava Ikonov, Specialized Academic Studies, Novi Sad. Responses on InterMedia questionnaire on young people and media, March 2001.

⁵ Jovanka Matic, Institute of Social Sciences, Belgrade; Dubravka Valic-Nedeljkovic, Novi Sad Journalistic School, Novi Sad; Radoslava Ikonov, Specialized Academic Studies, Novi Sad. Responses on InterMedia questionnaire on young people and media, March 2001.

⁶ Arustan Joldasov, Center for Social Research, Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Response on InterMedia questionnaire on young people and media, March 2001.

⁷ Kettle, Steve, "The Development of the Czech Media Since the Fall of Communism," *Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol. 12, no. 4, December 1996, quoted in Andrew Stroehlein, "Weaknesses of the Czech Media," *Central Europe Review*, vol. 2, no. 2, 17 January 2000.

⁸ Stroehlein, Andrew, "Weaknesses of the Czech Media," *Central Europe Review*, vol. 2, no. 2, 17 January 2000.

⁹ Buckingham, David, "Young people, politics and news media: Beyond political socialization," *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 25, no. 1/2, Mar/Jun 1999.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Bhavnani, K., *Talking Politics: a psychological framing for views from youth in Britain*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1991, quoted in David Buckingham, "Young people, politics and news media: Beyond political socialization," *Oxford Review of Education*, vol. 25, no. 1/2, Mar/Jun 1999.

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¹⁴ APEA—BBSS Gallup, "Health, Risks, Protection and Realization of Young People in Varna Region", APEA -Varna Regional Centre of BBSS, Gallup International, Varna, 26 September 2000, p. 46.

¹⁵ Zala Volcic, University of Colorado at Boulder; Karmen Erjavec University of Ljubljana, Slovenija. Responses on InterMedia questionnaire on young people and media, March 2001 in which they refer to a 1999 survey on "The Young and the Media" among 9,000 elementary school children in Slovenia. The study was commissioned by the Association of the Friends of Youth (ZPMS) in Slovenia and carried out by Erjavec and Volcic.

¹⁶ UNICEF, "Young People in Changing Societies", op.cit.

¹⁷ Huanσ. Mel. "Surfing the Baltic". *Central Europe Review*. vol. 1. no. 4. 19 July 1999.

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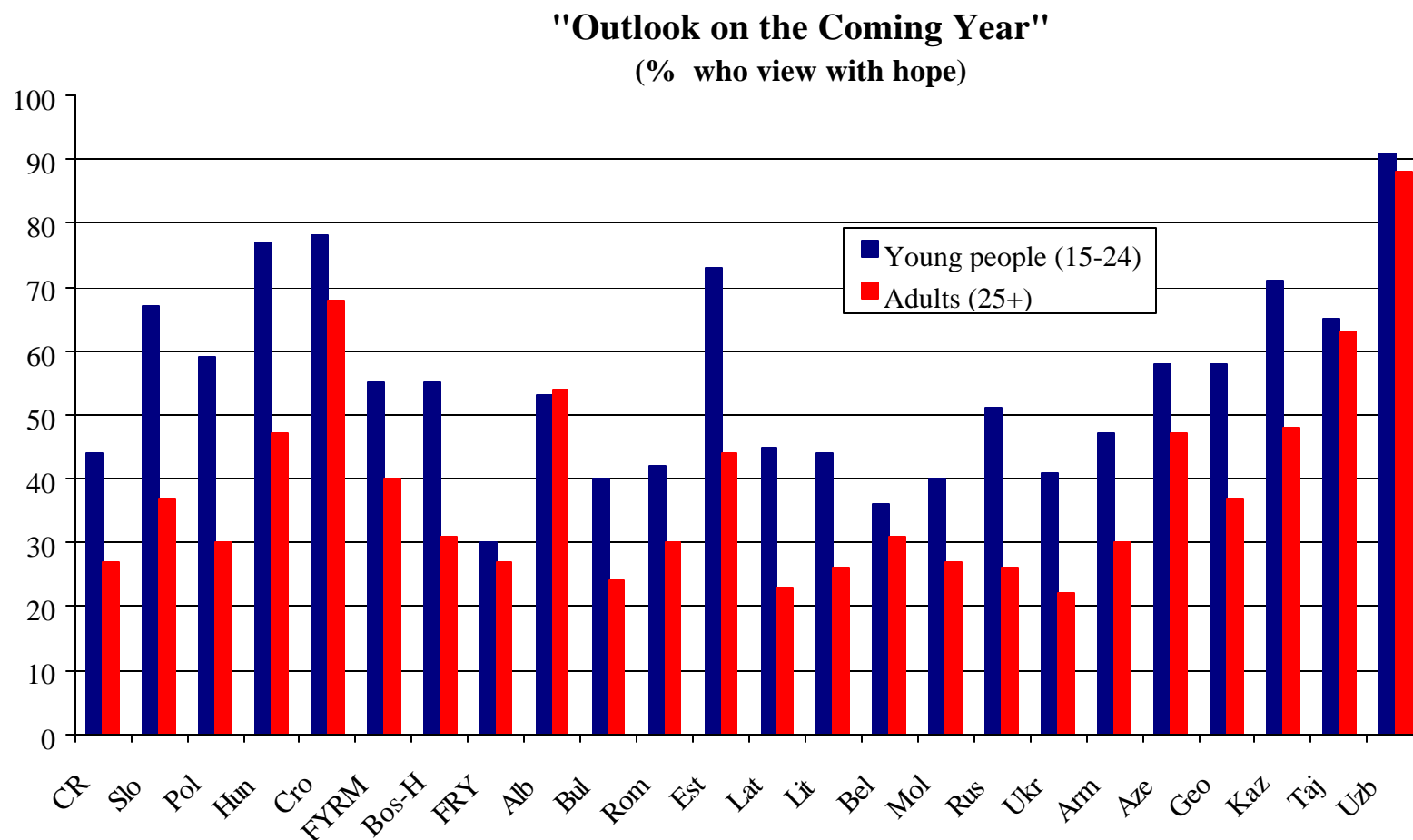
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APPENDIX 1: STATISTICAL TABLES

Table 1: Outlook on the Coming Year

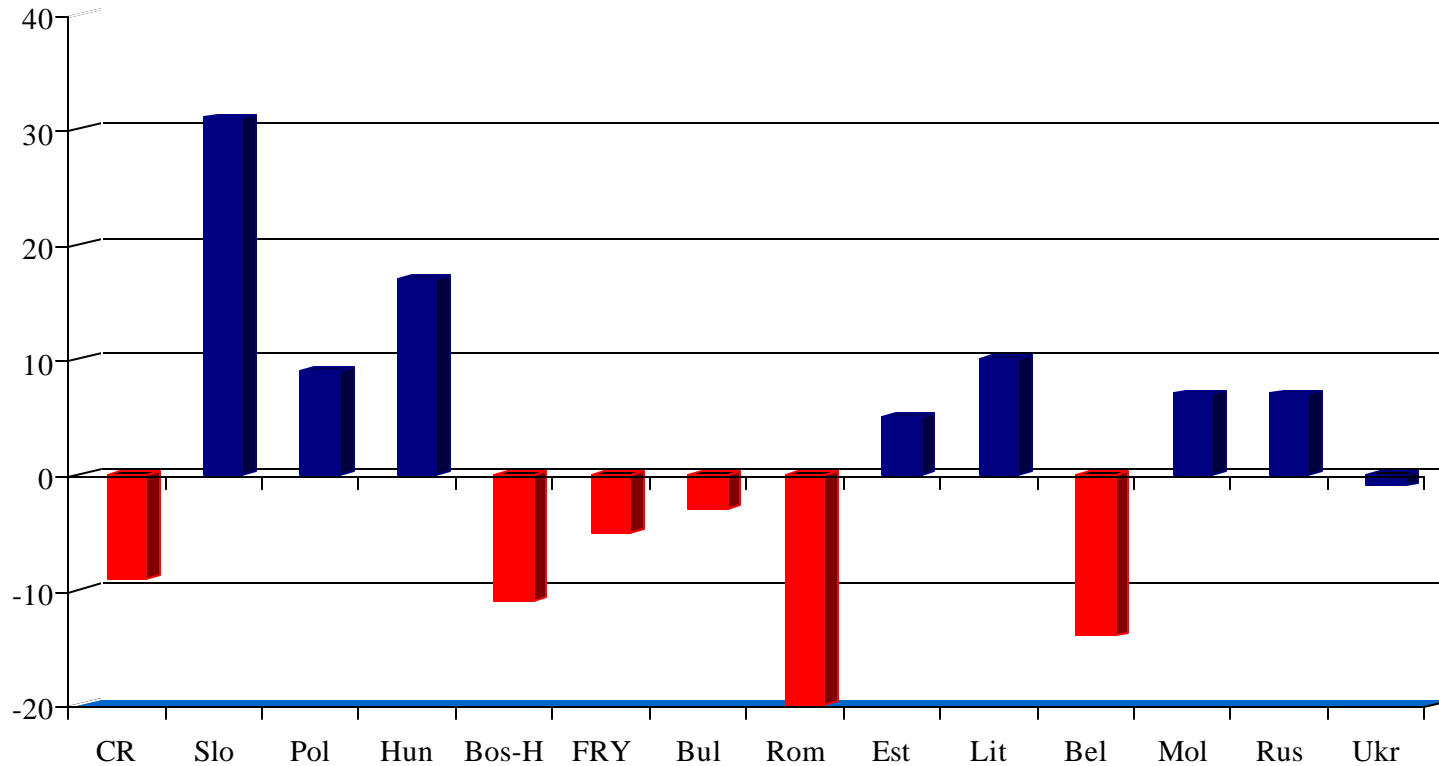


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 2: Trends in Hope Among Youth

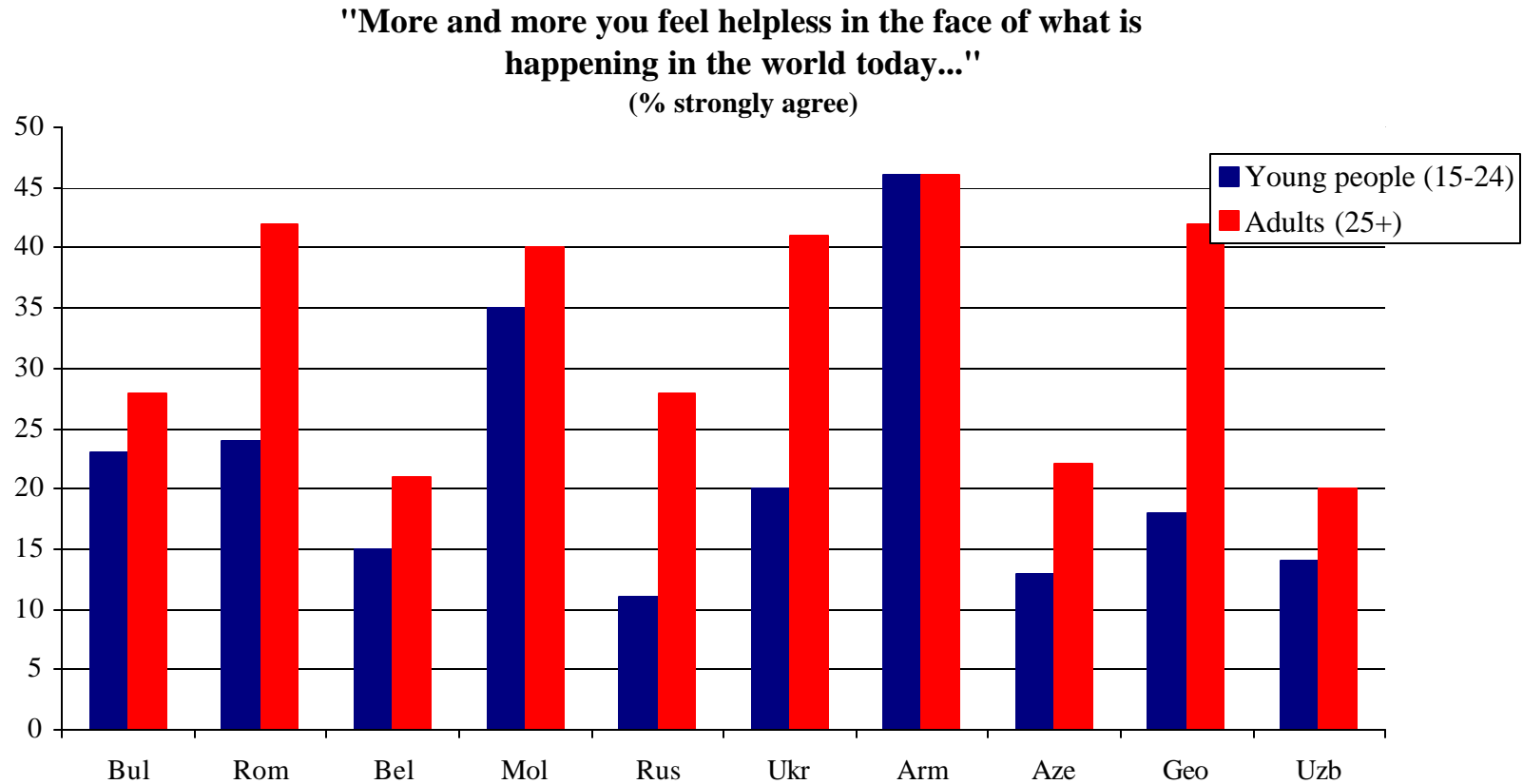
"How do you view the coming year?"
(% change of young people aged 15-24 who feel hopeful)



Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1993-97 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1993-99 for Poland, Hungary and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; 1996-2000 for Bulgaria; 1997-2000 for Romania, Belarus, Russia, Ukraine; 1998-2000 for Bosnia.

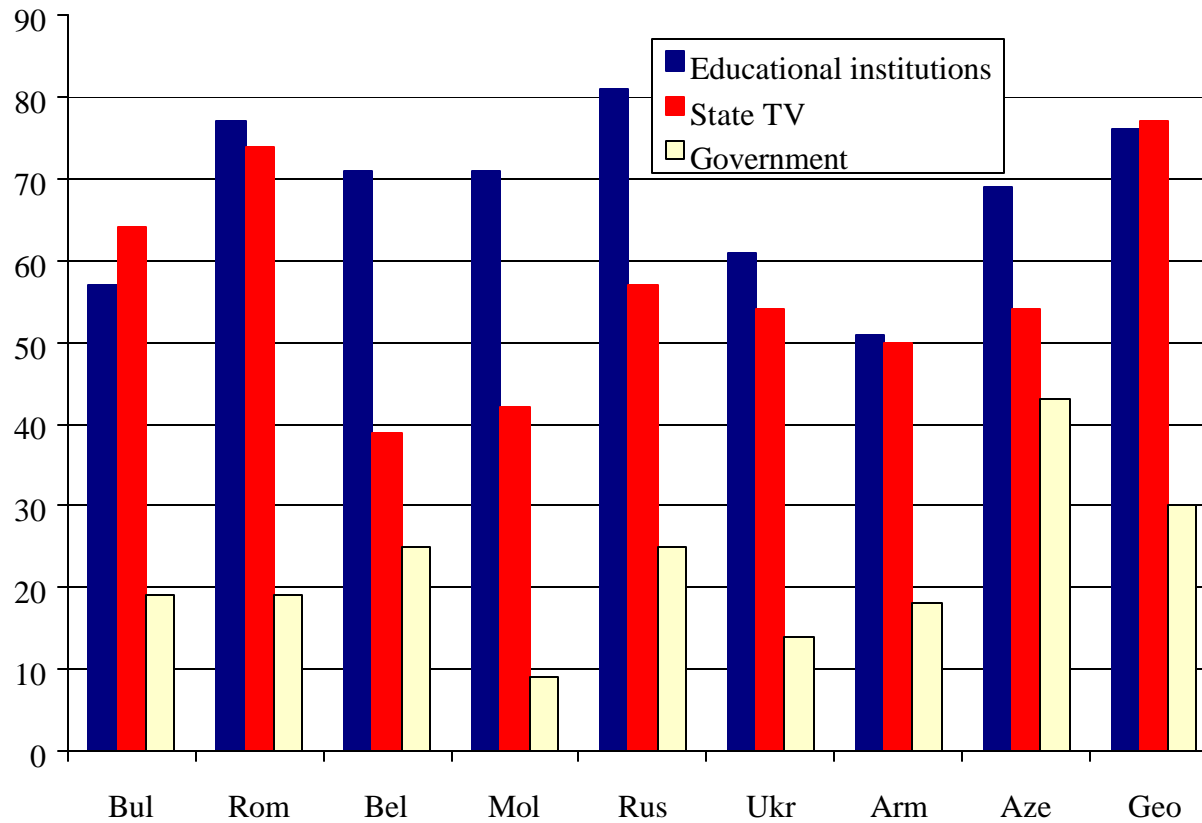
Table 3: Young People and Adults Who Feel Increasingly Helpless



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 4: Who do Young People Trust?

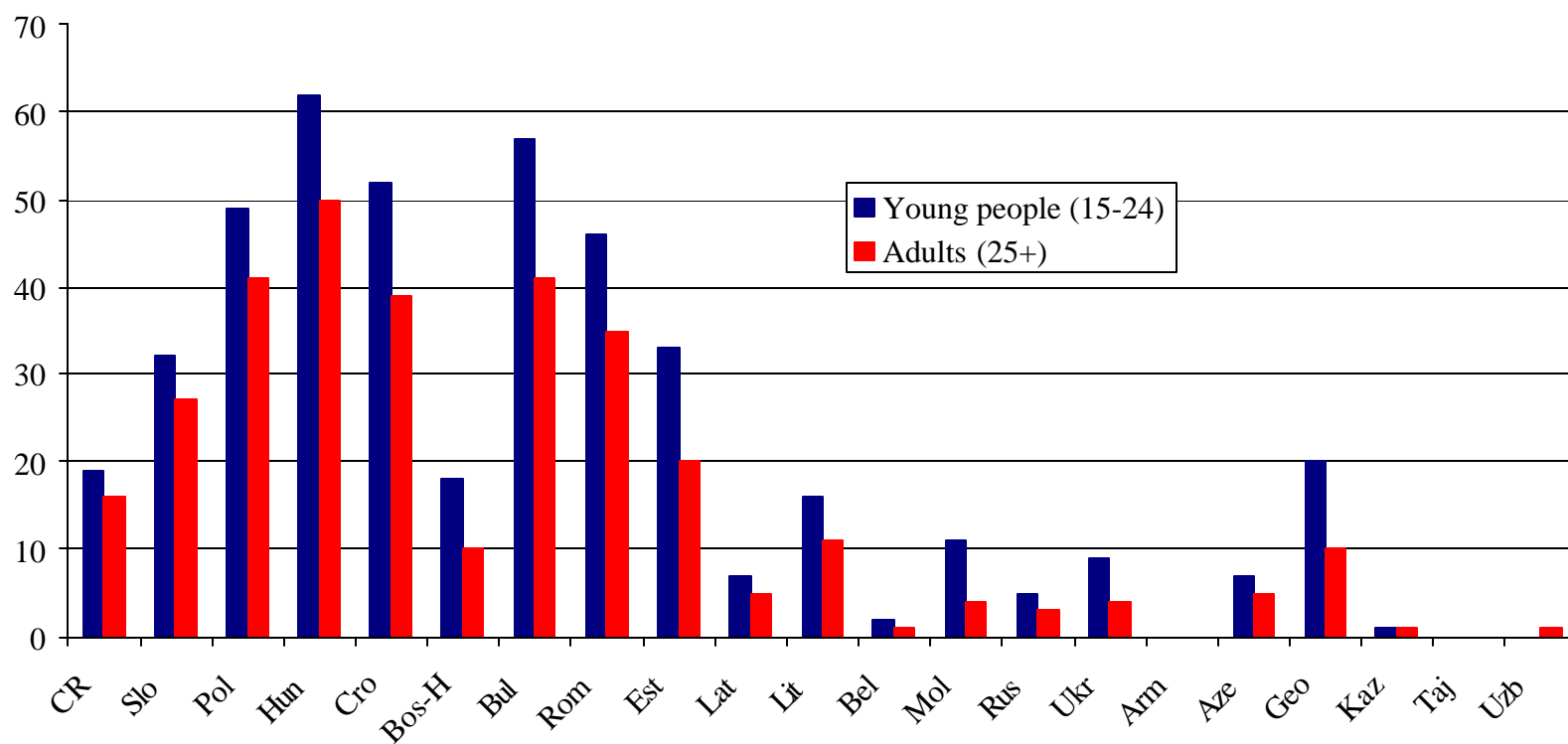
(% of young people aged 15-24 who trust at least somewhat)



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 5: TV Viewers with Access to 15 or More Channels

(% of entire population)

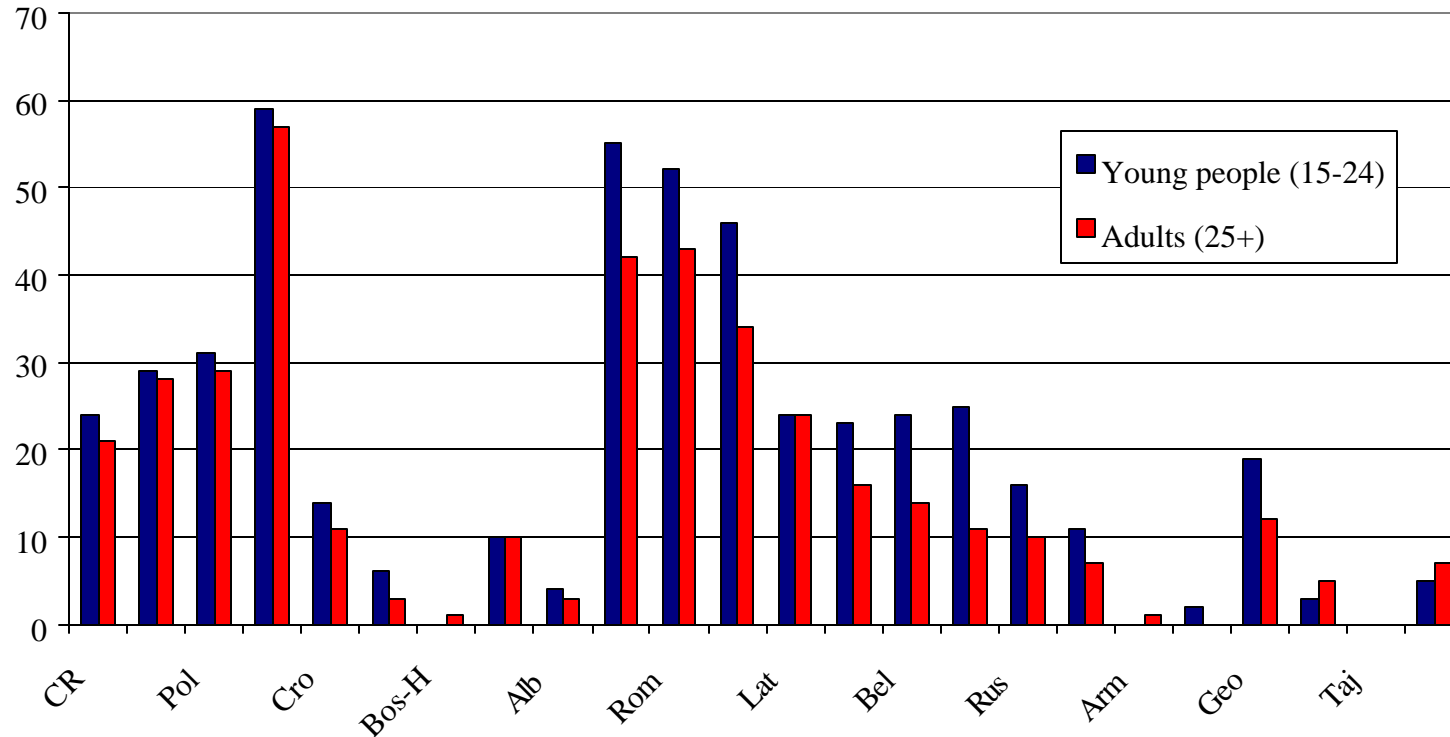


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Poland and Hungary; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 6: Cable TV Viewership

(% of entire population)

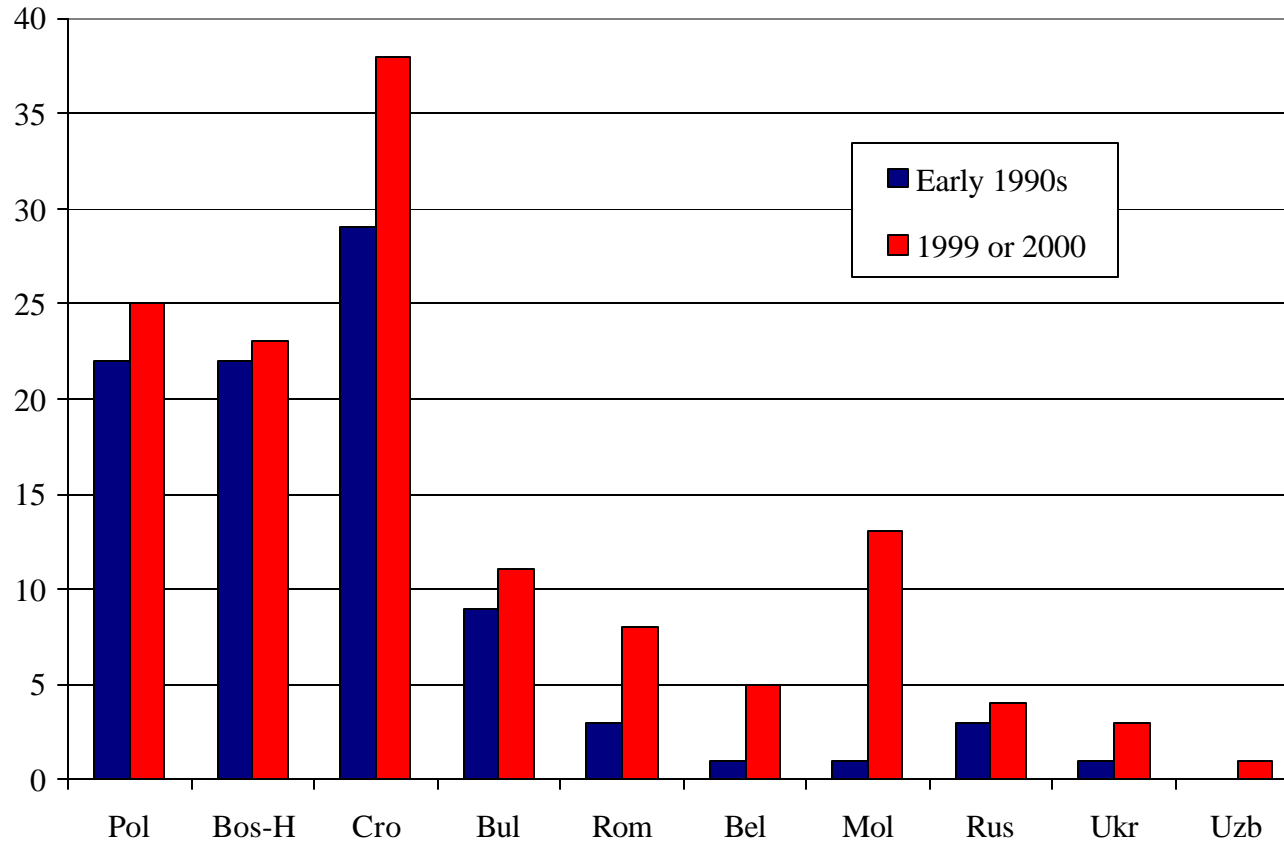


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 7: Change in Satellite TV Viewership

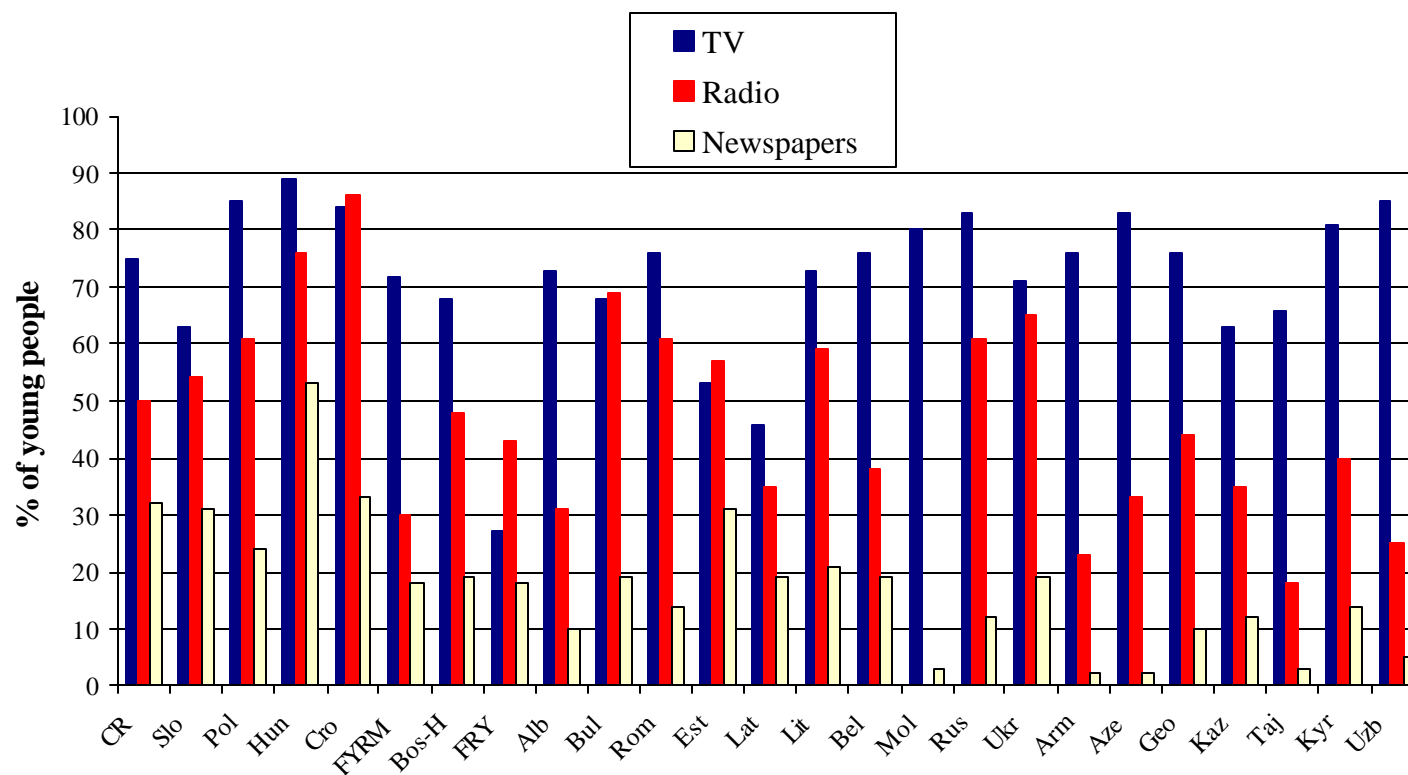
(% daily viewership among young people aged 15-24)



Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1993-1999 for Poland; 1998-2000 for Bosnia and Moldova; 1997-2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 8: Daily Media Use by Young People (15-24)

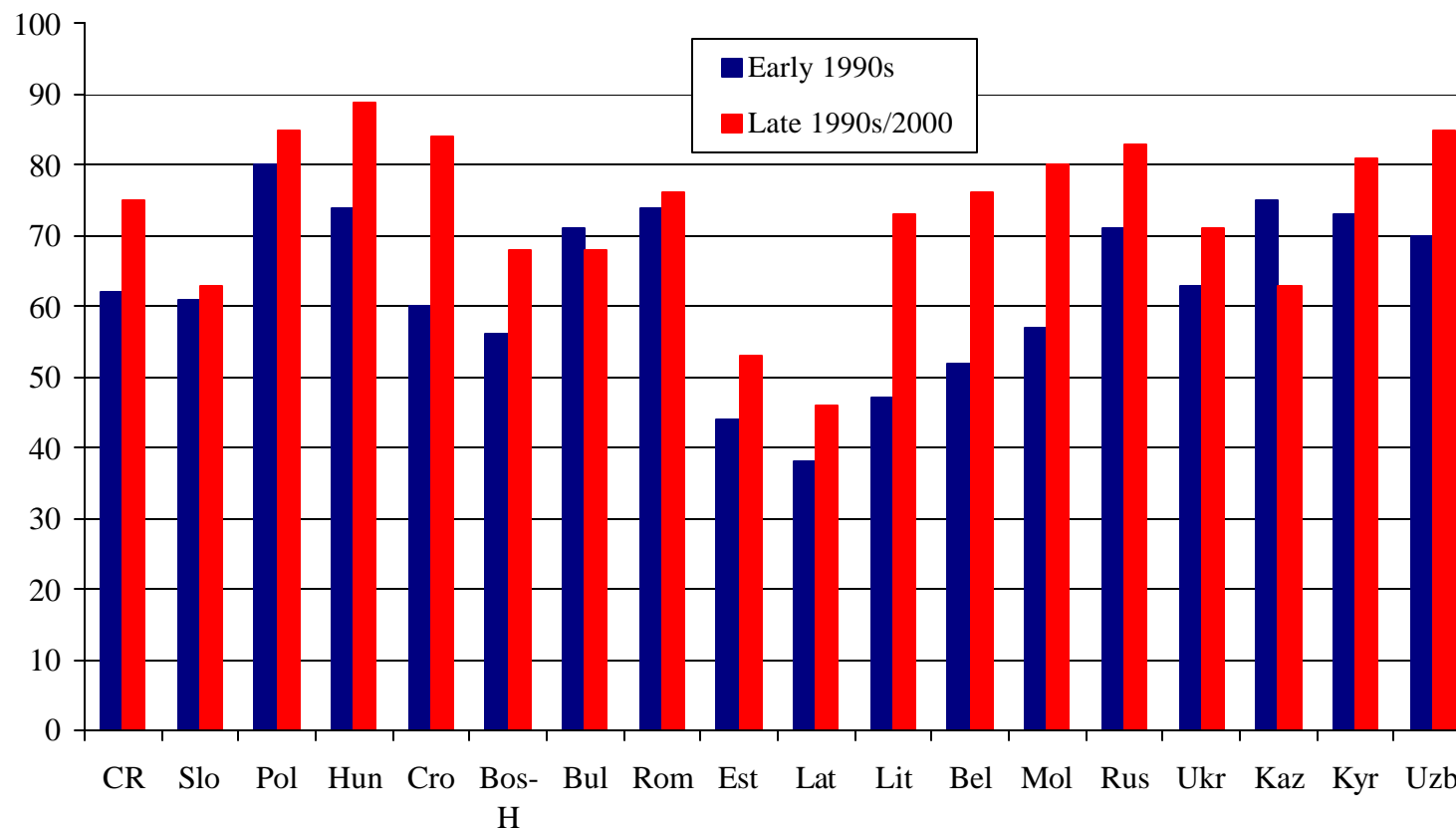


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 9: Change in TV Viewership

(% daily viewership among young people)

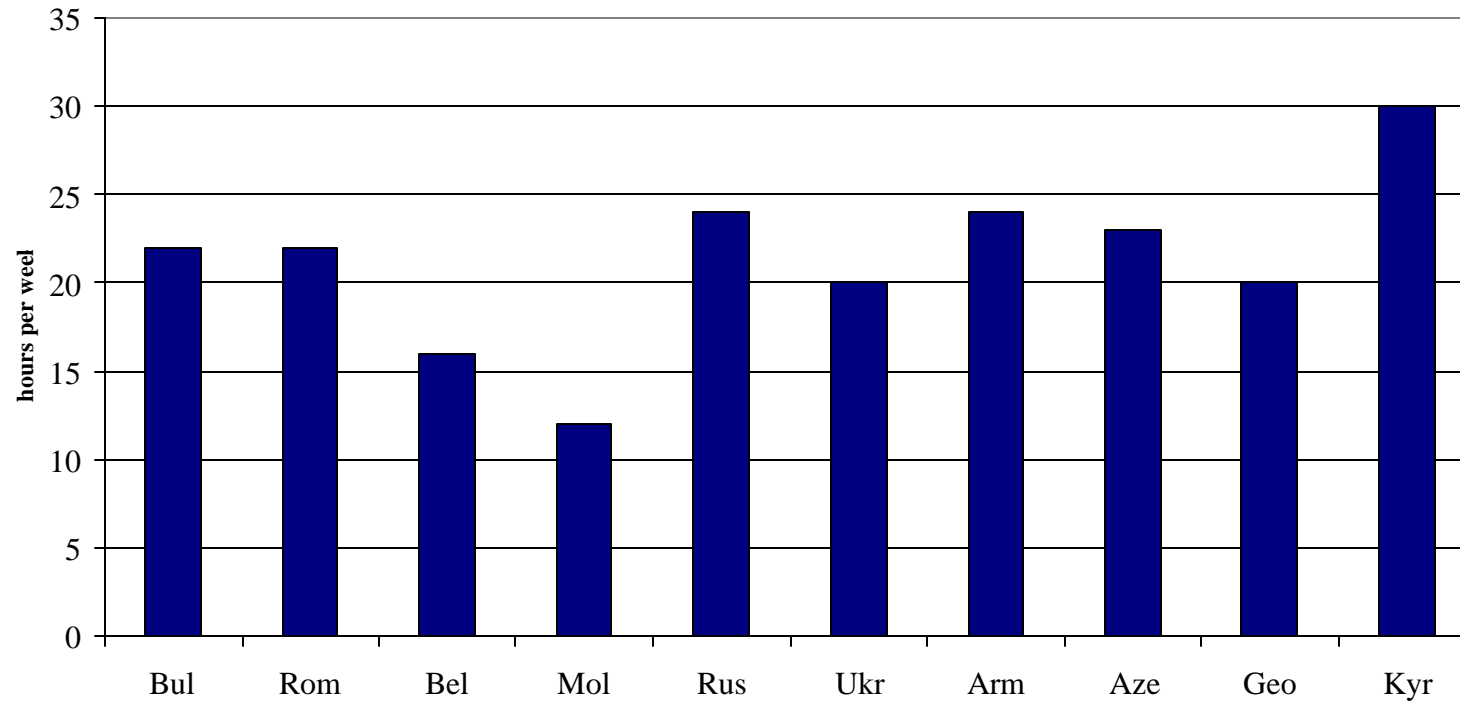


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1993-1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1993-1999 for Poland and Hungary; 1993-2000 for Belarus, Romania and Russia; 1994-2000 for Bulgaria and Ukraine; 1998-2000 for Bosnia, Moldova, Uzbekistan; 1993-1998 for Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan; 1997-2000 for Croatia.

Table 10: Weekly TV Viewing Hours

TV viewing hours per week among young people aged 15-24

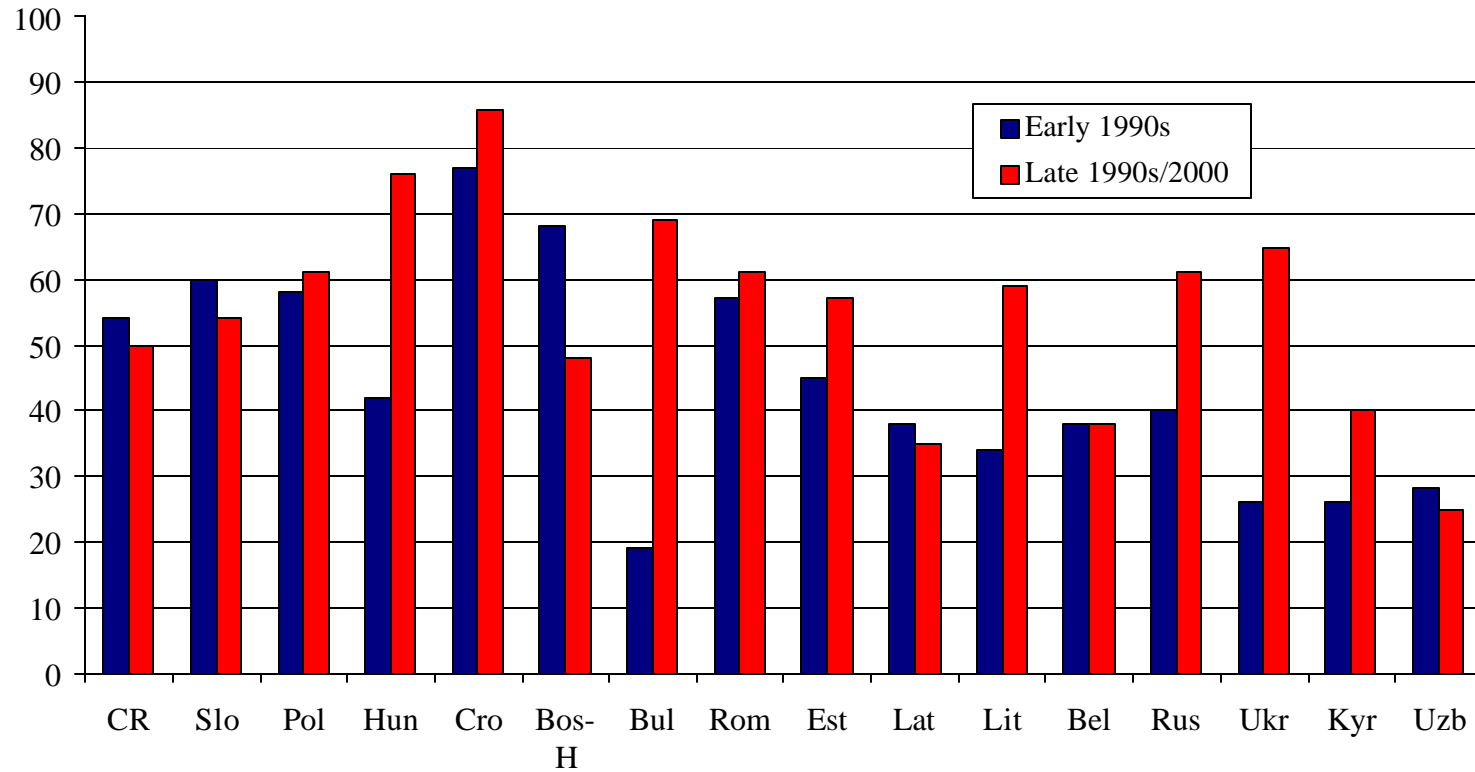


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1998 for Kazakhstan and 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 11: Change in Radio Listenership

(% daily listenership among young people aged 15-24)

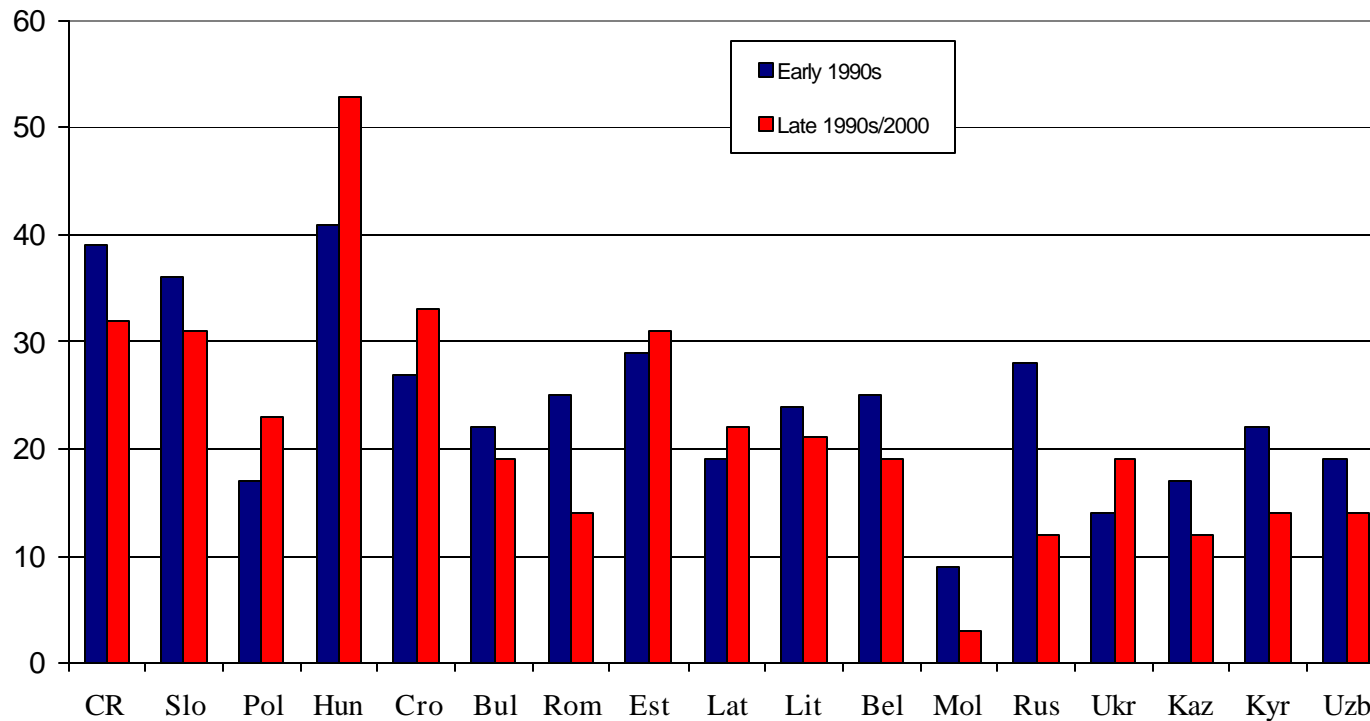


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1993-1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1993-1998 for Kyrgyzstan; 1993-1999 for Poland and Hungary; 1993-2000 for Belarus, Romania, Russia; 1994-2000 for Bulgaria and Ukraine; 1997 for Croatia; 1998-2000 for Bosnia and Uzbekistan.

Table 12: Change in Newspaper Readership

(% daily readership among young people aged 15-24)

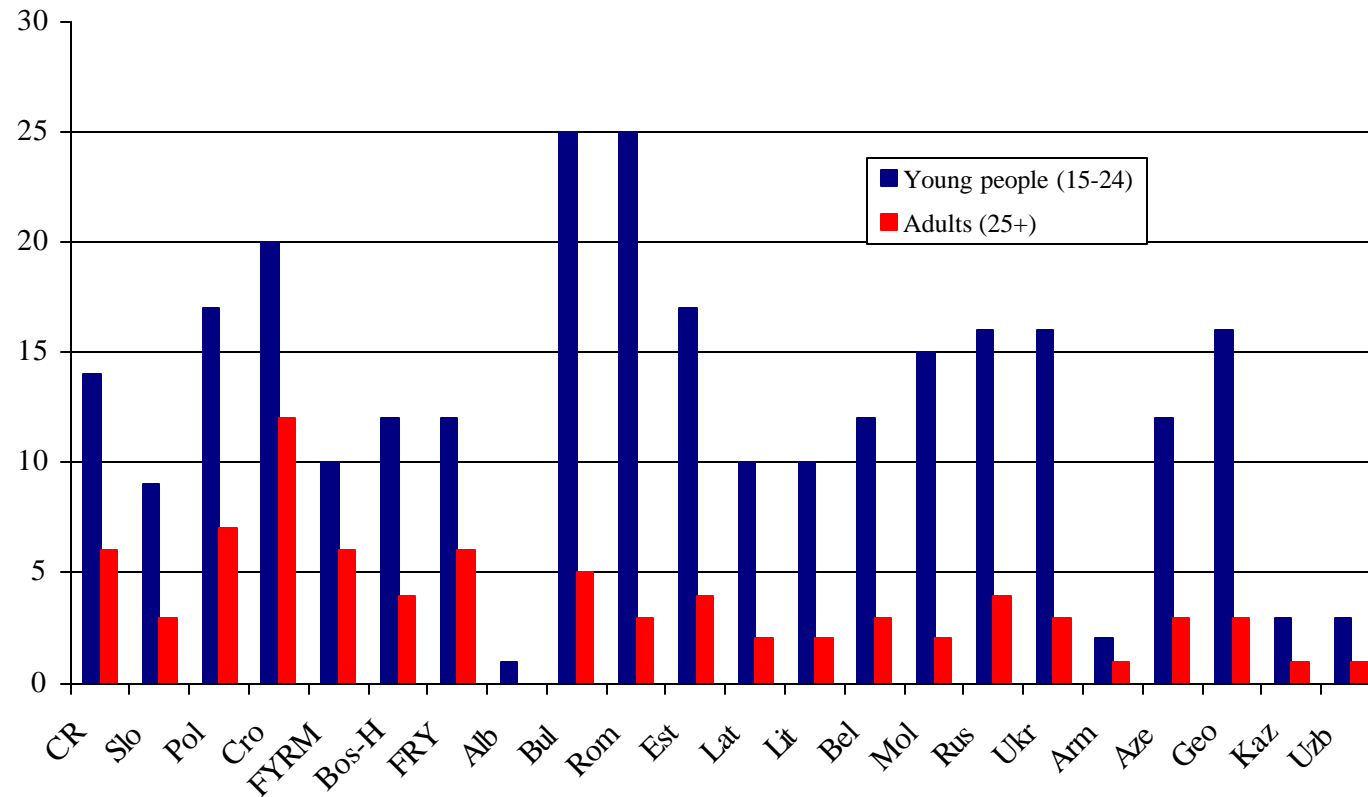


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1993-1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1993-1998 for Kyrgyzstan; 1993-1999 for Poland and Hungary; 1993-2000 for Belarus, Romania, Russia; 1994-2000 for Bulgaria and Ukraine; 1997 for Croatia; 1998-2000 for Bosnia and Uzbekistan.

Table 13: Internet Use

"Have you used the Internet?"
 (% who have used)

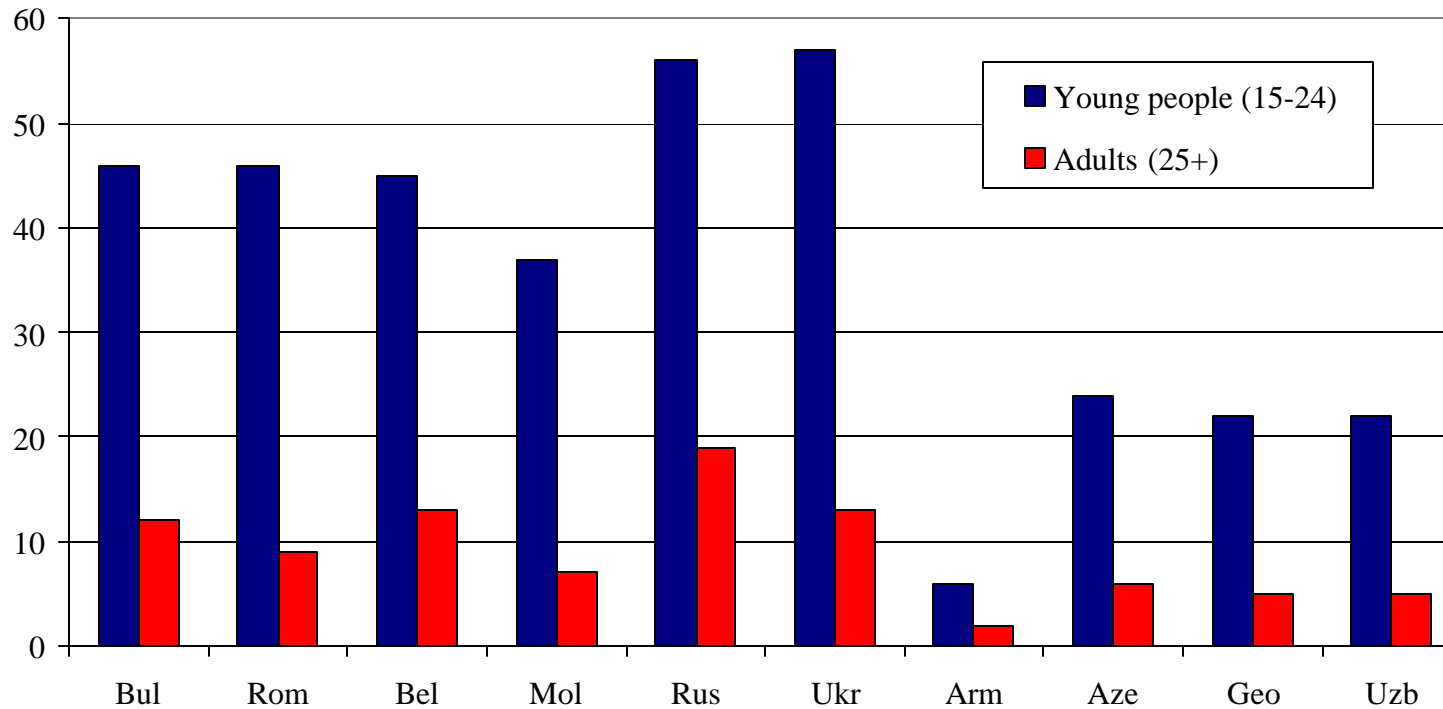


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 14: Computer Use

"Have you used a computer?"
(% who have used)

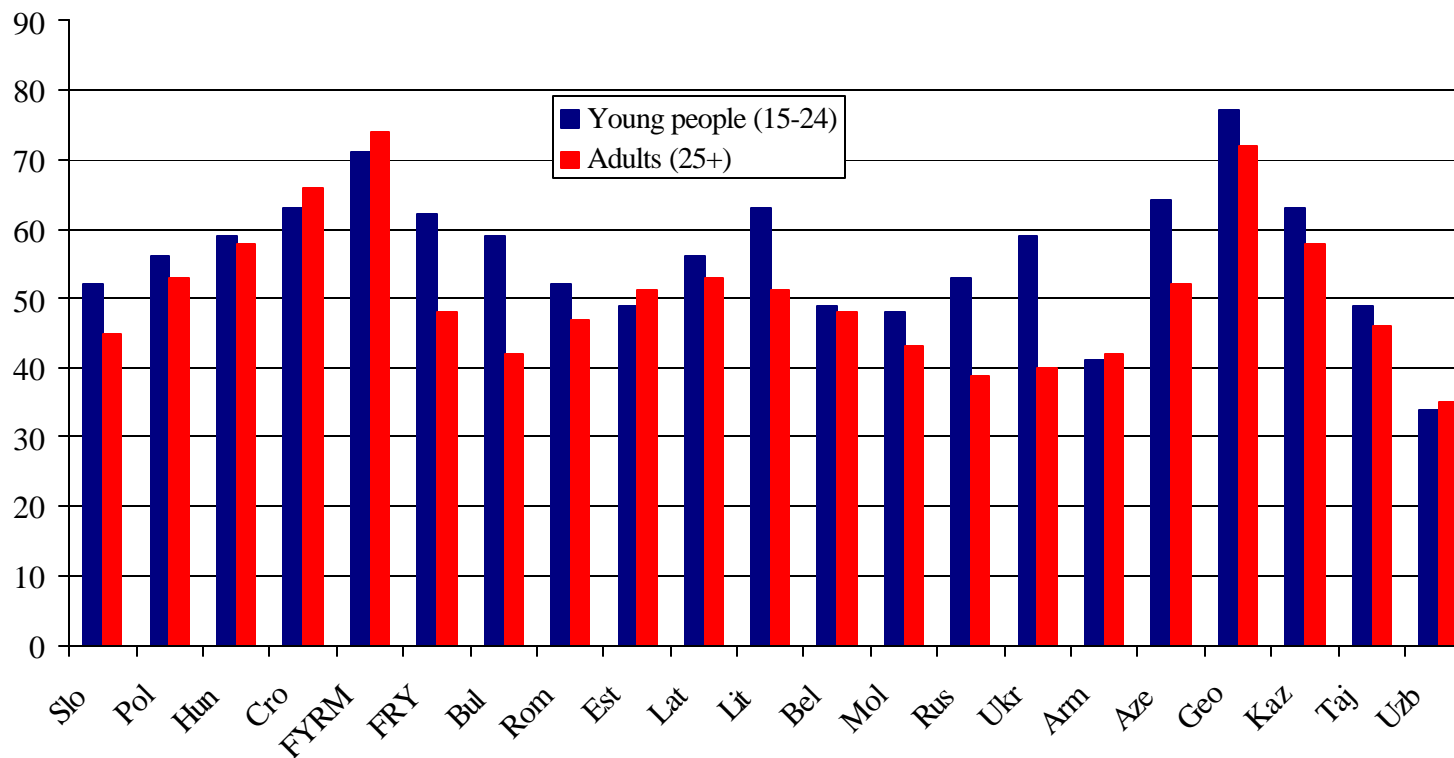


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Albania; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 15: Attitudes Toward Private and State Media

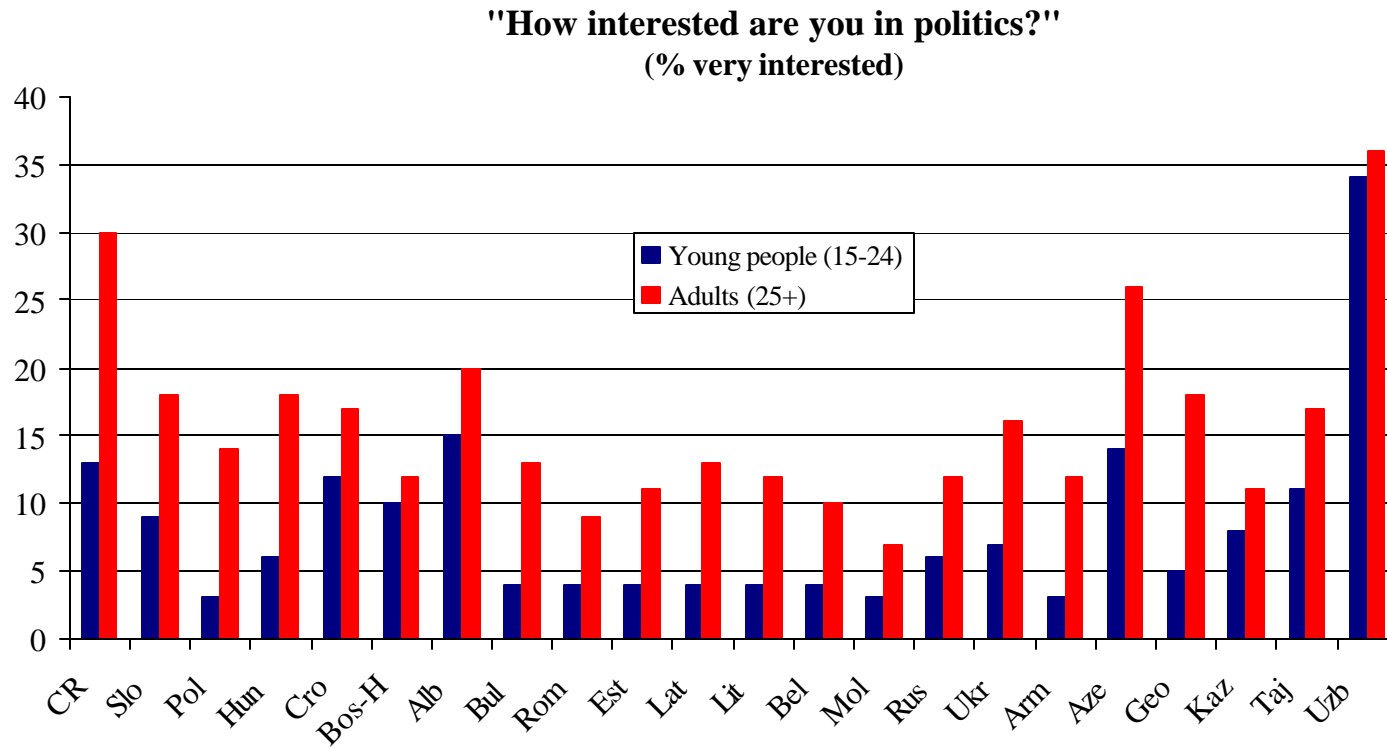
"Private media will always be more objective than State media"
 (% who agree)



Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 16: Interest in Politics

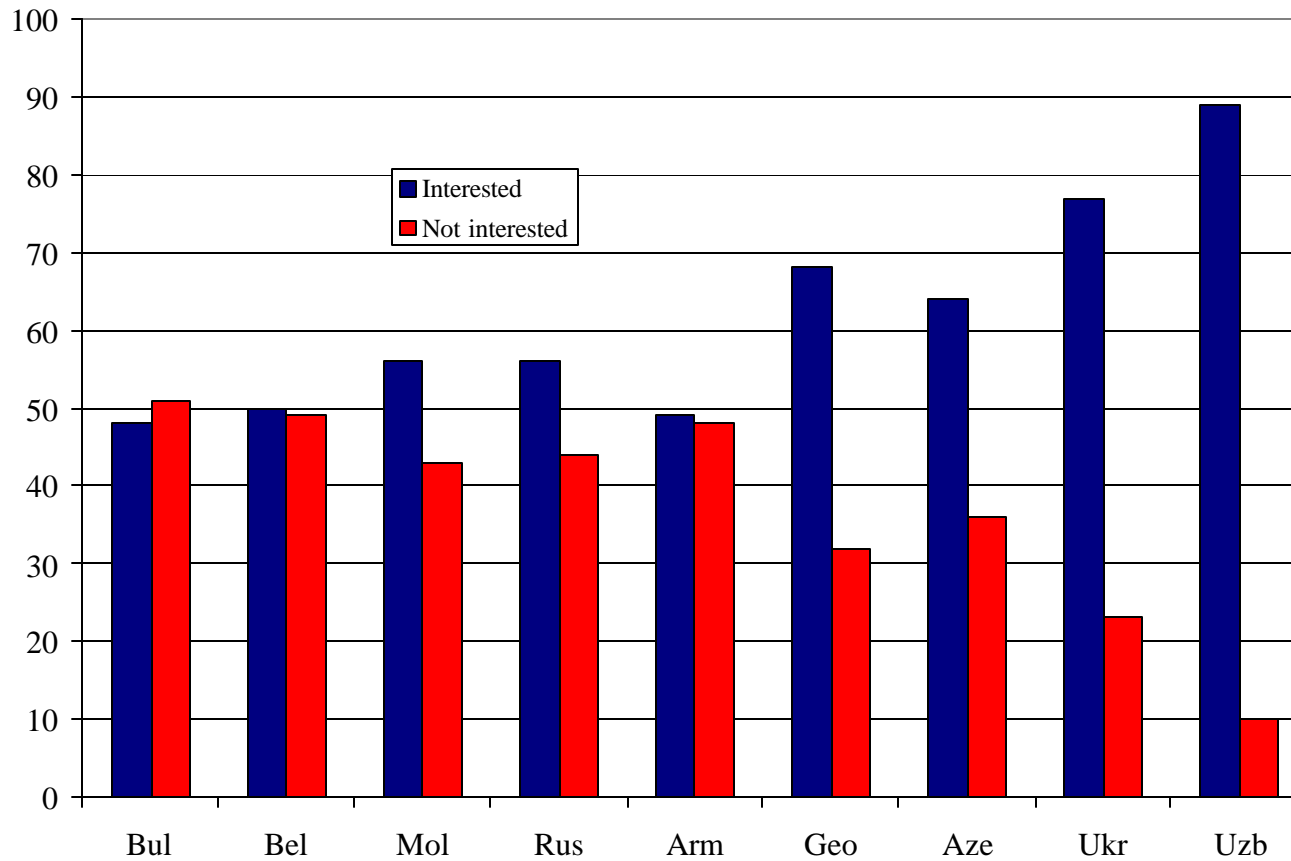


Source: InterMedia surveys

Note: Data refer to 1997 for the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania; 1998 for Kazakhstan; 1999 for Poland, Hungary, Albania; 2000 for the rest of the countries.

Table 17: Interest in Domestic Political Developments

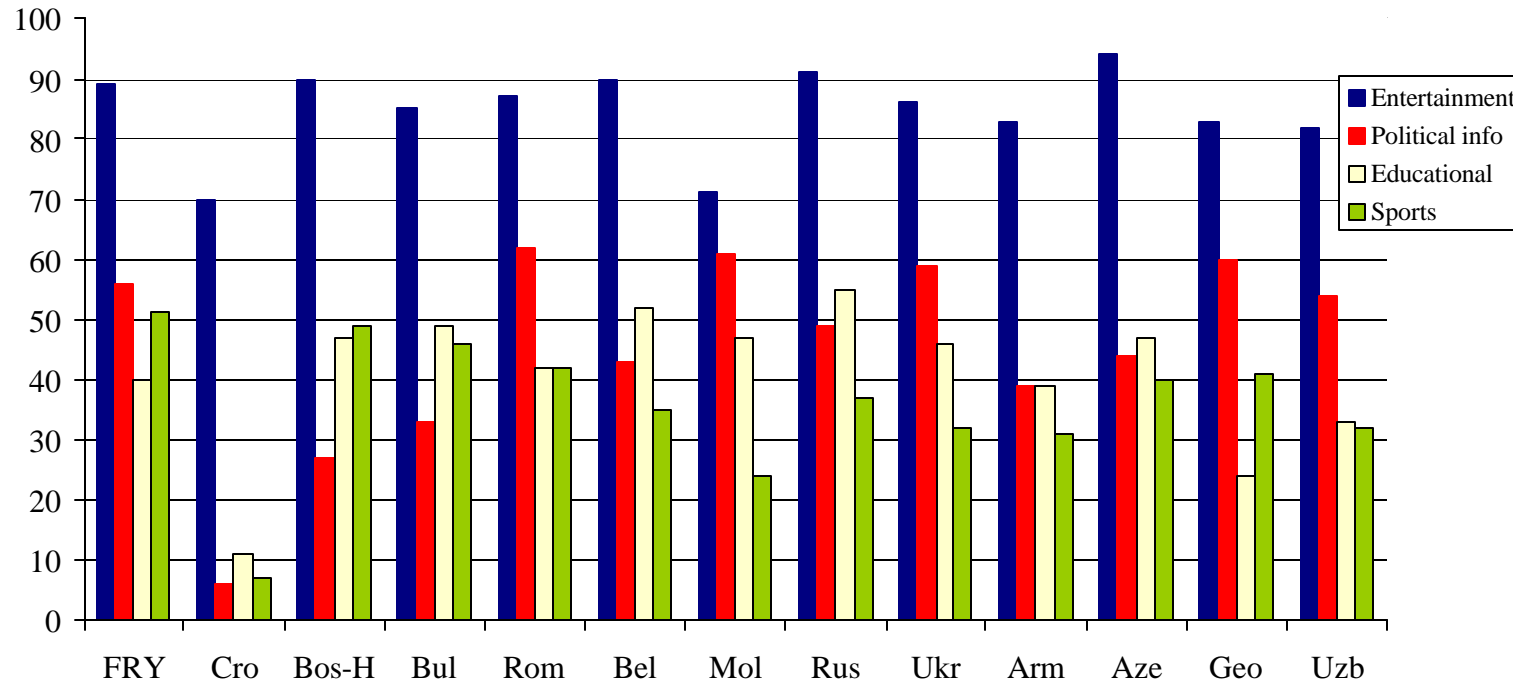
(% of young people 15-24 who are very or somewhat interested)



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 18: TV Programming Interests

"What kind of programming is most important to you?"
 (% of young people 15-24 mentioning as important)

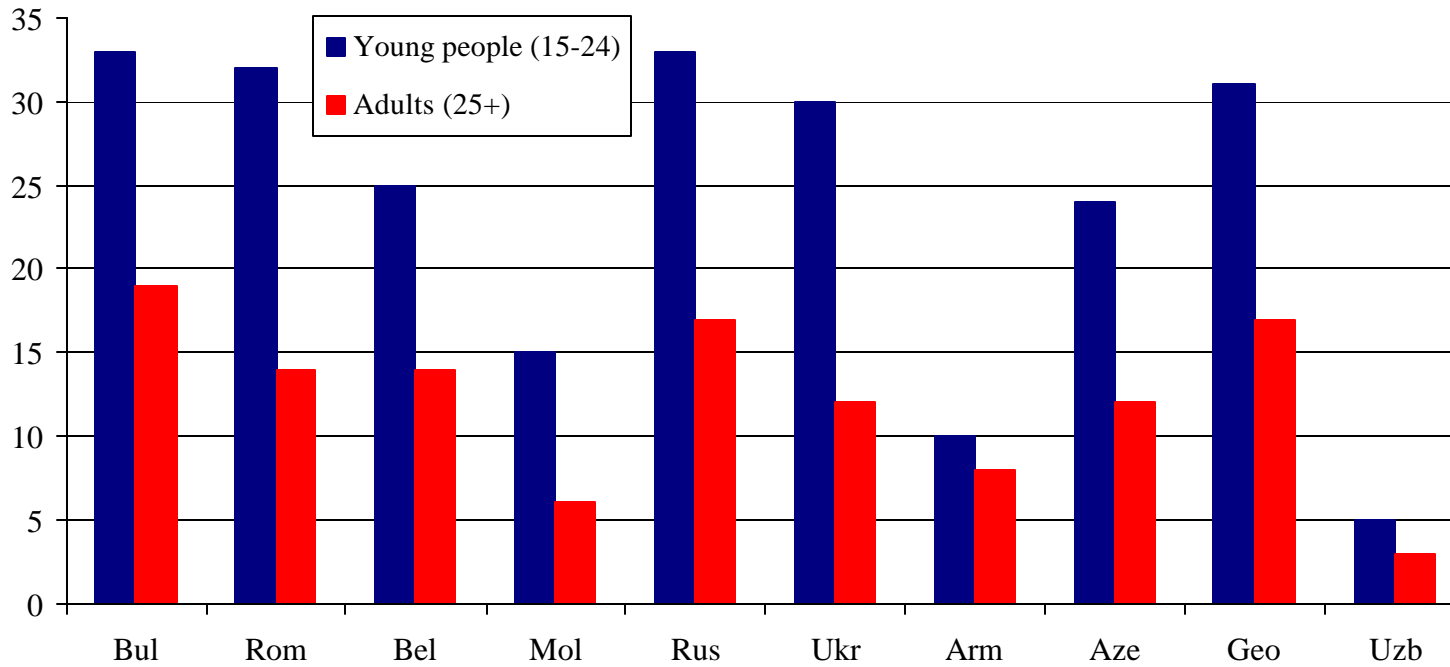


Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 19: Trust in Information on the Internet

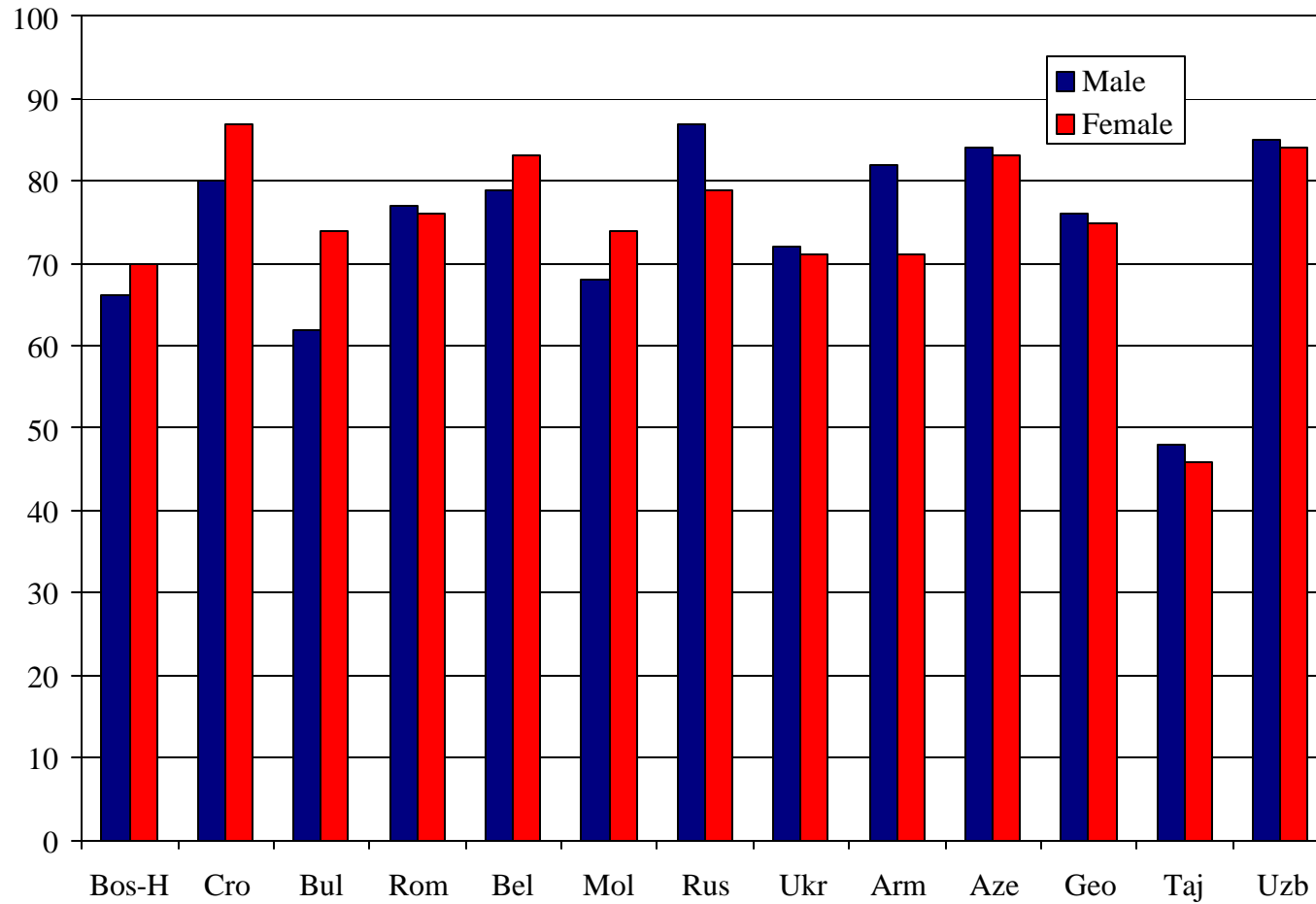
"How much of the information on the Internet do you think is reliable and accurate?"

(% who say most of it)



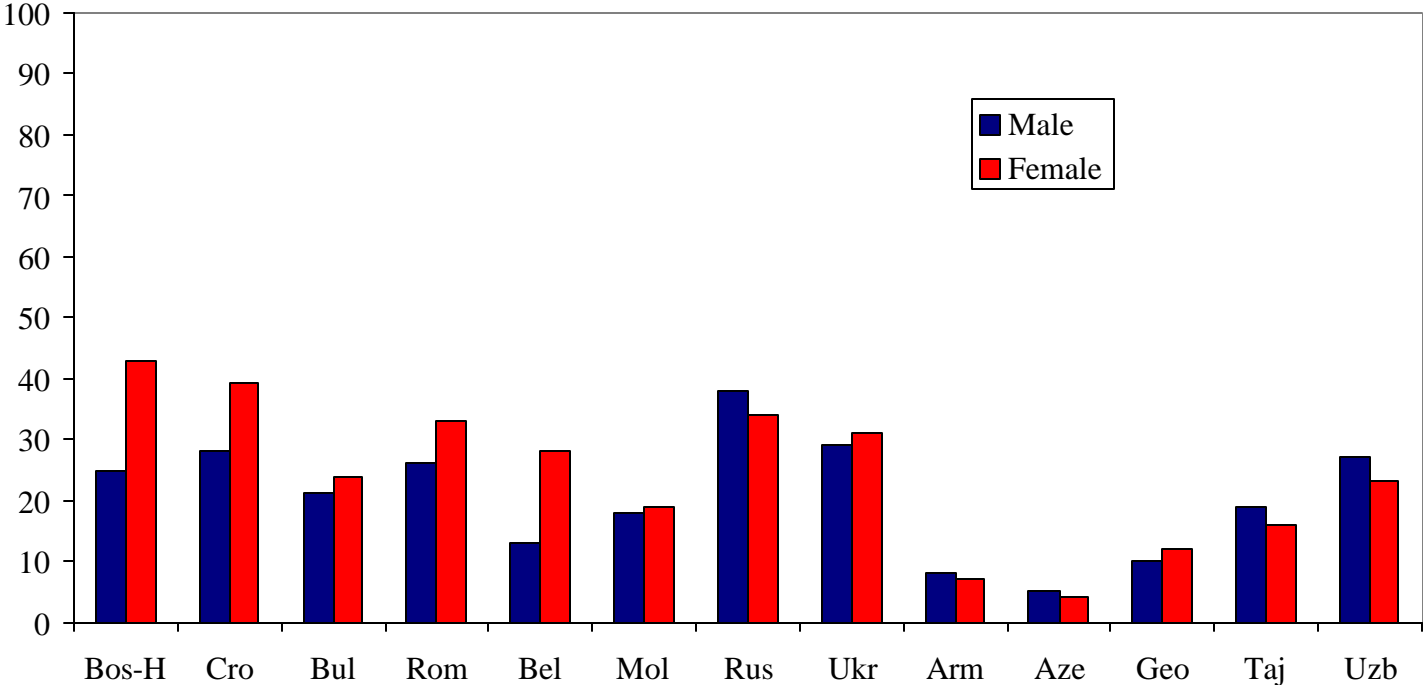
Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 20: Daily TV Use Among Young Males and Females Aged 15-24



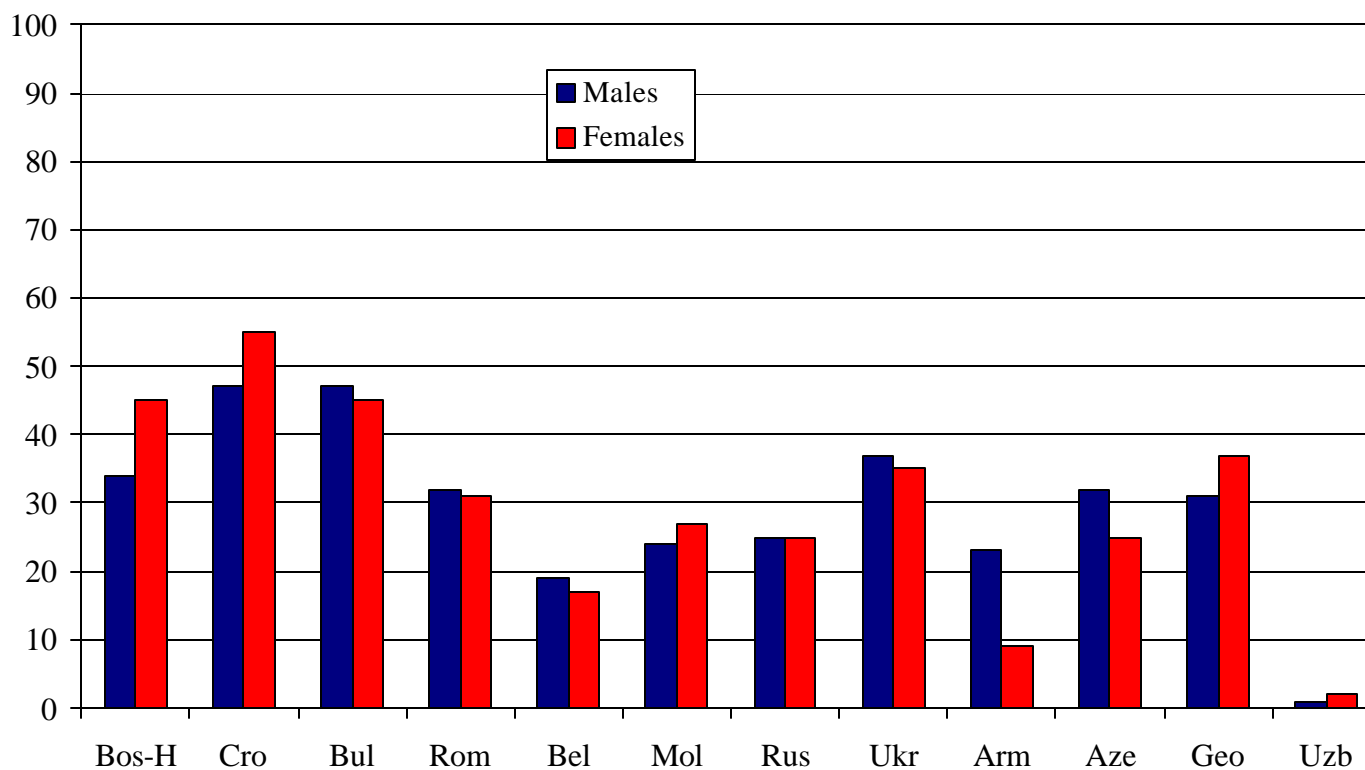
Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

**Table 21: Daily Use of State Radio Among
Young Males and Females Aged 15-24**



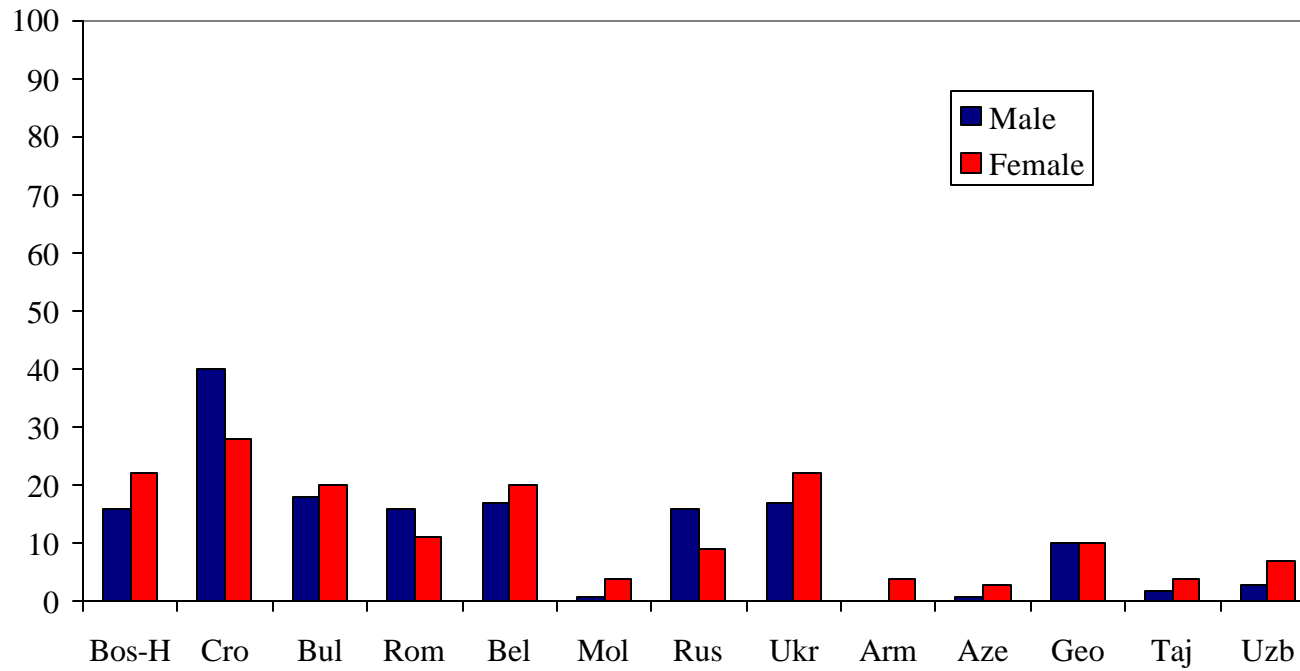
Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 22: Daily Use of Private Radio Among Young Males and Females Aged 15-24



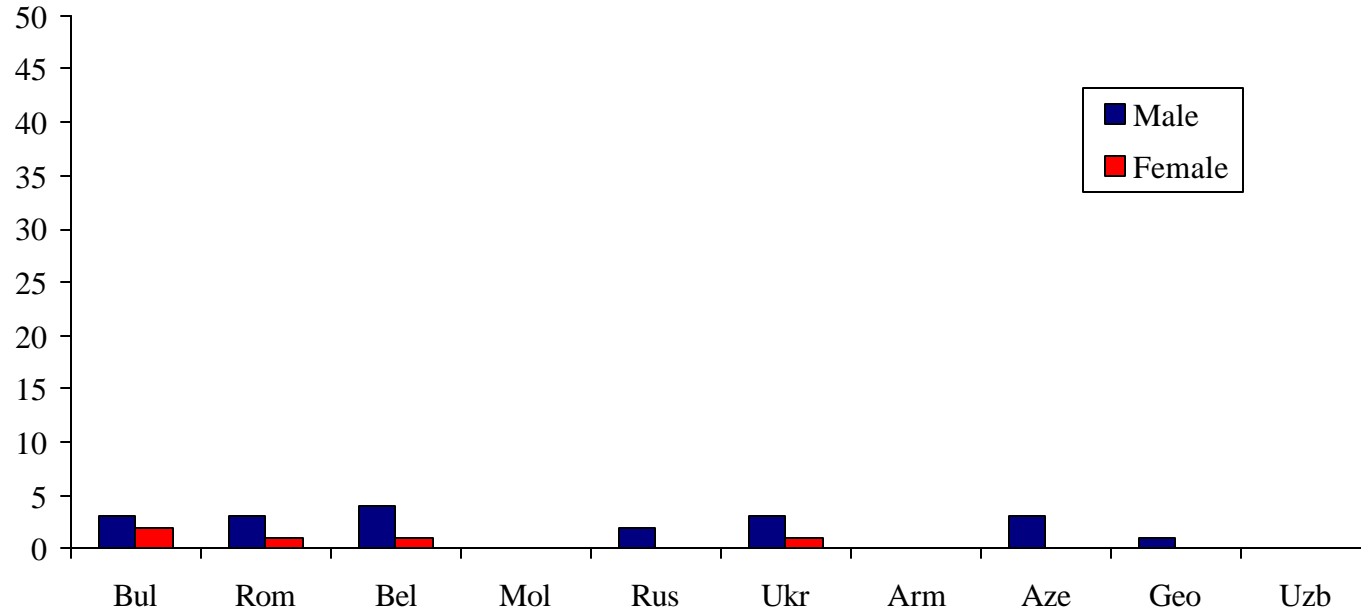
Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 23: Daily Use of Newspapers Among Young Males and Females Aged 15-24



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

Table 24: Daily Use of Internet Among Young Males and Females Aged 15-24



Source: InterMedia surveys (2000)

APPENDIX 2:
YOUTH MEDIA PROJECTS

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Youth Media Projects

This appendix lists youth media projects by country in alphabetical order. The information on the youth media projects was provided by media experts, researchers and UNICEF Communication Officers in each country.

Albania

Young Reporters

Albanian National TV and UNICEF are working together as partners on a nationally televised programme (*Troc!* or *Say it!*) featuring video news stories produced by eight 'Youth Video Bureaus' located in all regions of the country. The youth are the producers and writers. They make all decisions about the stories and their work is facilitated by adult helpers. Recent sample stories: a day in the life of a school drop-out; deplorable conditions in the main pediatrics referral ward; discrimination against the disabled and minorities in schools; the right to grow up in a healthy environment, and many others. (Potential national viewing audience of over 1,000,000; broadcast 60 minutes three times per week; programme carried on satellite transmission reaching Albanian speakers in Europe and North America)

Integrated Community Services Newspapers

A number of integrated community service centres sponsor small groups of children and youth to produce community newspapers.

National Young Reporter Training Seminar

35 young reporters trained for one week in basic skills for video production: camerawork and shot selection, TV interviewing and writing text for video pictures. Albanian, BBC, American TV journalists provided training.

TV Talk Show on Children's Rights *Who Am I?*

A five part national audience participation TV talk show on children's rights featuring children and young people as guests and correspondents and adult expert guests. Topics: schooling street children; education at crossroads: why are schools abandoned?; youth and their hopes for the future; youth and employment; environmental awareness; attitudes toward drug abuse; the relationship between parents and children; how the right of participation in the family is understood; attitudes toward disabled children; the right to participate (school, family, society).

Survey on Perceptions of Women and Children in Albanian Mass Media

A survey on perceptions of women and children in the Albanian mass-media, carried out in cooperation with the Albanian Media Institute, under negotiation.

Armenia

International Children's Day of Broadcasting

The Armenian broadcast media has participated in the ICDB (International Children's Day of Broadcasting) since 1995. In 1999, for example, the Armenian National TV (ANTV) and Armenian National Radio (ANR) featured material prepared by young journalist schools from seven regions. A direct link was established between the studios airing live programmes on ANTV and ANR. ANR also managed to establish a direct link with Georgian National Radio. In 2000, other broadcasters joined in, including the second biggest TV company (Prometheus) with nationwide coverage. The project was coordinated by AREG Children's News Agency stationed in the Armenian National Radio. The Agency was created in 1996 as a result of UNICEF's ICDB initiative. Then UNICEF helped train the first group of young journalists (aged 12-17). The following year UNICEF provided the Agency with a computer and a Super VHS camera. In 2000, a young journalist (aged 16) participated in the training on the CRC and the media conducted by PressWise in Yerevan. Young people trained by the Agency participate in production of a regular AREG TV programme aired by Armenian National TV; they are also involved in production of radio programmes and a youth magazine. The Agency has its young correspondents in almost all of Armenia's regions. In the course of the years, the 'Air to Children' campaign, making this global initiative into a truly national one. The Day is celebrated here by all the media -- electronic and print-- and is looked on as a day of communication by and for children. Communication is a much broader concept: children are encouraged to send their paintings and poems, to participate in contests; the approach is very creative, and UNICEF is presently just one of the partners, not a leader.

Azerbaijan

Internet Newspaper for Youth

An Internet newspaper for Youth will be established and regularly updated with the participation of the Ministry of Health Information Centre and the Youth Group "NUR" ("LIGHT"). It is expected that this product will enable youth to express their opinions, formulate problems and share them with peers.

TV News Broadcasting for Youth

Regular TV news broadcasting for youth will be established to keep youth and children of Azerbaijan updated on the latest news related to youth and children from a global, regional and national perspective.

Talk Shows on Children's Rights and Youth Issues

Sequence of talk shows on children's rights and youth issues will be conducted throughout the year, with the participation of young journalists as leaders of shows and resource officials invited from different organizations—government, academic and youth.

Belarus

Public Youth Press Centre

The Public Youth Press Centre will be established within the framework of the project 'Voices of Youth: Bridges for Communication.' The project will be aimed at development of youth journalism initiatives, production of TV, radio programmes, youth newspaper covering healthy lifestyles and child's rights issues. Ten workshops and master classes for young journalists will be conducted by professional journalists. A book created by young journalists, *Our Messages for the 21 century*, will be published.

Network of Youth Information Centres

The Network of Youth Information Centres has been established within the framework of the project 'Global Movement to Support Children and Youth Initiatives.' The main goal is to exchange information and views about children and youth initiatives, to involve the media as partners. Young people are able to produce their own information bulletins, newsletters, and videos.

Internet Centre

An Internet Centre has been established within the framework of the project 'Internet for Peer Communication.' The goal is to create communication and learning networks, providing youth with opportunities to get together, communicate, get information and develop youth initiatives, using Internet resources and electronic media: Internet conferences, bulletins, websites, Internet newspapers.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Colourful Wall -- Children's Radio Network

Project initiated in 1993 in Sarajevo with an independent radio station ZID. First developed to satisfy the educational needs of children in Sarajevo in times of war, it developed into a programme covering a broad scope of topics for children and young people ranging from child rights, educational issues to substance abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention. Programme currently includes six other radio stations, strategically positioned in all regions of B&H (both entities and all ethnic areas). Its unique feature is that it includes into its preparation young people and children from often conflicted political and ethnic backgrounds. Currently, there are five hours of programmes produced by young people (with adults guiding them) covering programmes for preschool children, elementary schoolchildren and adolescents. There is also a special part of the programme in the Roma language and another part, begun this year, covering the main minorities in B&H such as Albanian, Macedonian, Hungarian and Slovenian children (this is a part of the programme produced in cooperation with minority associations and is open to participation of all interested minorities with the aim of promoting the idea "of colourful" children's world in B&H. In addition, part of the programme is for parents, mainly addressing health/nutrition issues and produced by adults, since we realized that parents are often misinformed about many issues relevant to children. Programmes are prepared and produced by young people and children in all areas and involve children who are a regular part of the radio programme as well as groups from elementary schools.

TV Programmes

UNICEF B&H has supported production of TV programmes by and for young people produced at the B&H TV, a programme for younger children *Let's Go Ahead* and a programme for adolescents *Pro and Con*. Though the programmes were not fully produced by young people themselves, they feature their work as reporters and hosts in case of the programme for younger children, and adolescents as creators of televised debates covering not only B&H but also other countries in the area. The main focus of the programmes ranged from children's rights to children with special needs and health protection, whereas the debates dealt with issues such as the importance of education, political decision-making and HIV/AIDS. Another TV project, entitled *Unreal World*, produced by the independent TV station in Republika Srpska (ATV Banja Luka) features prominent societal issues such as children in contact with law, children in institutions, substance abuse and violence in the family. The programme is produced by young people, in cooperation with youth NGOs.

My View -- Film and Video School

A project initiated in 2000 gathered about 100 children and adolescents within a film and video school so they could learn how to produce a series of documentary sequences and TV spots on ecology, substance abuse, nepotism as a societal problem, ethnic reconciliation, etc. Young people were able to design the whole project from the initial selection of topics to storyboard, to screenplay writing and the whole process of the filming and editing. Final results mix professionalism with the children's vision of what the world should look like. Crucial to the project is the fact that the children did it all themselves. The project is to continue in other areas of B&H and will rely on a peer-education angle, now that a group of young professionals has already been created.

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia **(including UN Administered Province of Kosovo)**

Children's Rights in the Media

It started last year (2000) in three selected towns in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and was very successful. Through the project, UNICEF supported 600 secondary schoolchildren, parents and representatives of the local media, who jointly developed a method of working together to increase coverage of children's rights in the media. In all three towns, a close cooperation and partnership between children/adolescents and the local media was established. The media, both electronic and print, opened up for children's issues and embraced adolescents as full participants in the creation of children's and youth programmes by starting TV and radio programmes or establishing columns in newspapers on children's and youth issues, with children/young people participating in the project. A network of youth media in the three towns was established. This year, the same project is being carried out in three more towns in Serbia, but contacts with the initial towns and media continue. The aim is to link the youth media in all six towns and thus widen the youth media network.

Media Training on Reporting on the Abuse of Children's Rights

In February 2001, a media training course on reporting on the abuse of children's rights was held for journalists from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (including UN Administered Province of Kosovo). The training was facilitated by the PressWise Trust. It was quite useful since journalists (some of them young) learned more about the CRC and about interviewing children. In addition, the training was an opportunity for journalists from the three entities to meet, share experience and establish contacts -- something that was previously lacking here.

In UN Administered Province of Kosovo the monthly journal *Mileniumi* is put out by secondary schoolchildren, who work on a voluntary basis. It is open to all young people and issues covered include drugs, education reforms, HIV/AIDS, and other youth related topics. Circulation is 15,000. We have recently sent one of our journalists to attend the PressWise training session held in Skopje for journalists from Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro.

Youth Radio Programming 'Qeshu rini qeshu'

This is a project implemented by Media Action International. They do six 15-minute programmes a week and distribute them to 21 radio stations in UN Administered Province of Kosovo. Programmes cover all youth-related issues, using interviews with young people on the various problems they face in everyday life.

Both these projects are presently only available to Albanian youth, but we are hoping to start similar projects by the beginning of April for Serbian youth in the enclaves. These projects are planned to continue until the end of this year.

We do have other youth projects, such as youth centres, and the production of leaflets aimed at raising awareness on reproductive health, drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, etc., but there is no media component as yet.

Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Youth internship program and the media

In late 2000 UNICEF engaged youth in a multi-ethnic youth internship programme. Six Macedonian, Albanian and Roma high school and university students became engaged in media-related projects. For instance, two interns conducted a qualitative overview of use of the Internet by young people in 13 major cities and all regions of the country, information that will be used for the Say Yes for Children campaign.

For the first-ever youth section in FYR Macedonia's Situation Analysis for Year 2000, carried out with the help of UNICEF, four of the interns identified key issues of concern for youth in the country and subsequently developed a questionnaire. The interns then used the questionnaire to interview other young people from different ethnic groups regarding their attitudes toward topics such as smoking and drugs (what do young people feel about them and why do they start?); sexual health (what do they know and feel about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pregnancy and how do they protect themselves?); computers (what role do computers and the Internet play in their lives and how wide is access to computers?); and media (do the media reflect the concerns of young people and can they voice their opinions and influence their future?). The results will be used to help shape potential approaches to resolving health problems and habits among young people such as banning cigarette advertising; increasing sexual health education and so on.

Media Market Survey

UNICEF has supported the Institute for Political, Social and Legal Research to conduct a survey disaggregated by gender and age among 2,700 children, adolescents and adults. Results show, for example, which medium is most popular among young people, which kinds of celebrities they find most credible and what kinds of campaigns appeal to them. The survey is continuously referred to in the design of media campaigns and programme communication material.

Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles through Media Design

UNICEF is supporting a long-term media campaign to promote healthy lifestyles among young people. Starting in March 2001, all secondary school students will have the opportunity of creating a message in a medium of their choice (radio, TV, or print) on the topics of HIV/AIDS (including STDs) and substance abuse (alcohol, smoking, drugs). Winning teams for each medium and category will go into production with a professional advertising agency and their "commercials" will be broadcast free-of-charge in national media for the next year and beyond. Winners of the competition will be announced during a well-publicised launch in June or September 2001; which will also coincide with GMC promotion.

Child Rights TV Series

This programme, scheduled to start in Spring 2001, is being implemented in partnership with the Association for Civic Initiative and will be aired on national television. Each episode (approximately six) will focus on one children's right and involve young people interviewing ministers and other leaders about practical steps to change an identified situation or problem with regard to the specific "right." Throughout the programme, young people will be filmed by the Association for Civic Initiative, which comprises media professionals. It is planned that the final session will be held in Macedonia's Parliament, with young people acting as the ministers, and with the Speaker of Parliament presiding over the session.

Roma Magazine for Children and Young People

UNICEF supported the production and distribution of an issue of the only Roma magazine in the country aimed at children and young people. Refugee children in collective centres and Roma children, including refugees, attending local elementary schools.

Georgia

Training on Reporting on Children's and Women's Issues

UNICEF, together with Internews Georgia, conducted a two-week training workshop in general television techniques, with special reference to children's and women's issues for local TV journalists and cameramen. The workshop, led by British journalist Michael Delahaye and Ukrainian cameraman Andrey Stepanenko was based on the television-training manual "Children and Women in Vision" commissioned by UNICEF for the Thomson Foundation. The main objective of the workshop was to arouse the interest of the media towards the situation of women and children in the country and to assist journalists in developing their reporting skills, with the ultimate aim of creating a global network of informed national journalists. During the seminar, the journalists prepared four three-minute films reflecting the theme of children and women. Themes included street children, iodine deficiency, bride kidnapping and abortion.

Seminar on Mass Media and Convention on the Rights of the Child

In June 2000, UNICEF conducted a three-day seminar on Mass Media and the Convention on the Rights of the Child which was facilitated by the PressWise Trust. The seminar was based mainly on the teaching course mapped out by British Training Centre Press Wise and UNICEF. Some 20 Georgian journalists who cover social problems participated in the seminar. Also present was a representative of the Department of Journalism of the State University of Tbilisi who is willing to use the training materials as part of his department's course.

International Children's Day of Broadcasting

With UNICEF's support the Children's Studio of the State Tele-Radio Corporation participates in the International Children's Day of Broadcasting. The programmes prepared within the ICDB highlight the way children are making a difference in Georgia and feature those who are agents of positive changes. Children themselves take an active part in the preparation of the different programmes featuring children's councils in schools, Youth Parliament, etc.

TV Programmes on Children in Mountainous Regions

UNICEF supported the Georgian State TV Corporation and in particular, the Children's Studio of the 1st Channel, to prepare TV programmes on the situation of children living in the mountainous region of Georgia, Pshav-Khevsureti. The project aimed to draw attention of decision-makers and society as a whole to the problems of the children who suffer due to the various difficulties that the region is facing nowadays. The main participants in the projects were the children and members of the TV studio, who were actively involved in the preparation of the programmes. The children from the studio had a chance to meet with their peers living in the mountainous areas and discuss all the issues affecting their lives. As a result of the project, six 20-minute programmes were prepared and broadcast. The children actively participated in the preparation of the TV programmes.

Newspaper for Street Children *Maugli*

In 2000 UNICEF supported the Coordination Center for Minors' Affairs to produce the newspaper called *Maugli* for street children as a supplement to the official newspaper of the Ministry of Education. UNICEF provided the newspaper with the necessary technical base for printing. The newspaper highlighted the needs and problems of street children. The children participated in the preparation of the newspaper and also had a chance to publish their stories, poems, pictures, etc. in the newspaper.

Youth Parliament

The Children's Studio of the State TV and Radio Corporation prepared four 20-minute TV films about the activities of the Children and Youth Parliament of Georgia. The Children and Youth Parliament set up a special subcommittee on media relations. Young parliamentarians have also been involved in the preparation of their information bulletin, highlighting the main activities of the parliament.

TV Studio Televeziri and Animated Drawings

UNICEF supported the project of the local TV studio Televeziri to create animated films using children's drawings depicting children's rights. The most exciting moment of the project was when the children participated in the animation and dubbing of their own pictures. By producing pictures on the Convention, and then participating in their animation, the children learned about their rights and were able to express themselves through their drawing. The fact that disadvantaged children from various institutions participated in the initiative made the project even more worthwhile. A film is being created, using various animated drawings on the theme of children's rights.

Voices of Youth

On 8 March 2001 members of the Children and Youth Parliament participated in an hour-long internet chat with UNICEF Director Carol Bellamy on the topic of the media and young people.

Kyrgyzstan

Generation X

Weekly Youth TV magazine programme *Generation X* was developed in partnership with local youth media groups and introduced in the second half of 2000 for national broadcast to an estimated half a million children and youths in the 10-25 age group. The first 16 (25 minute) programmes featured many important lifestyle issues concerning child to child violence, conflict in the south, street crime, trafficking of young women, corruption in the education system, employment opportunities, HIV/AIDS awareness and teen pregnancy risks. The Generation X programme was informally evaluated by the Bishkek office and a group of children and young people at the beginning of 2001 and it was decided to continue with the programme. This year, the Generation X group will work closely together with, and offer technical support to CNN student bureaus in Bishkek.

CNN Student Bureaux, Bishkek and Osh

Kyrgyzstan is one of seven countries to have been chosen to host two CNN Student Bureaux in a joint project between the CNN/Turner Learning Foundation and UNICEF Communication Division in NYHQ. The project was begun at the end of 2000 and started in earnest in January 2001. In Bishkek, the Children's Media Centre will host the CNN student bureau and in Osh (after assessing the possibilities) we have decided to establish the CNN student bureau as an independent body in the public library in order to ensure openness and accessibility for all children, a high level of security, support from other international organizations and from donor supported initiatives also located in the public library. Capacity building and equipment provision are being implemented and CNN/Turner Learning will train the core group of children from the two bureaux at the end of March. The two CNN student bureaux will submit reportages to CNN on a monthly basis to be broadcast on CNN's daily NewsRoom programme and its website. The CNN student bureaux will retain copyright over the material so it can be used nationally and locally. It is also planned that the CNN student bureaux will play a crucial role in the GMC process in Kyrgyzstan.

FM Radio Salam in Batken

The FM Radio Salam project was initiated in July 2000 based on a partnership between UNICEF, Foundation for International Tolerance (a local NGO working with conflict resolution and prevention in Batken) and INTERNEWS (an independent media watchdog). Batken region is a cross border zone between Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan and represents one of the most critical areas for conflict potential in the Ferghana Valley. Almost 50 per cent of the population are young people and their

development is critical due to the situation and difficulties stemming from poverty, high rates of crime and substance abuse, high rates of unemployment and the lack of telecommunications infrastructure and educational opportunities.

The radio station is run by young people and has developed a youth volunteer network from the schools in the local communities in the Batken region. The youth volunteers are providing the Radio with local news features and are at the same time functioning as links between the centrally located radio station and remote rural communities. FM Radio Salam is ready to begin programme broadcasting in March 2001. The programme broadcast have been designed after assessing the needs and wishes of disadvantaged rural youth living in the Batken region and will focus on objective news and information (local, national and international), healthy lifestyle messages, tolerance, education, livelihood skills and entertainment among disadvantaged rural youth. The broadcast will be in the three main languages of the region (Kyrgyz, Uzbek and Russian) and will cover approximately 200.000 residents within Batken and in the cross border areas.

Kazakhstan

‘Youth and the Media’ Festival

Some 250 young journalists took part in a UNICEF-supported ‘Youth and the Media’ Festival that was held in Astana, from 8-10 June 2000. The young people were drawn mainly from young reporters clubs throughout Kazakhstan, as well as from similar clubs in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and the Russian Federation. Professionals from the Kazak and Russian media gave a set of masterclasses on a variety of subjects, ranging from the print media to working with radio, communication and interpersonal skills. The young reporters also took part in field trips in the area and were given the opportunity of interviewing representatives from NGOs and local officials. They were able to hone their skills in a 90-minute press conference that brought together representatives from UNICEF, the Ministry of Information and Culture, and the Municipality of Astana. UNICEF supported the organization of this Festival as part of its Youth in the Media project, which is based on the premise that the media arts and emerging technologies can become the new frontiers of advocacy for young people by young people. It is therefore important that children and young people are enabled to document the world as they see it and are given the opportunity to develop their creativity, self-expression and critical thinking skills.

Global Movement for Children Round Table

The Festival culminated in a round table on ‘The Global Movement for Children and what it could mean for Youth and the Media’. It concluded that the media arts can combine with social commentary to empower young people, help them find solutions to their problems and strengthen their communities. It also concluded that for young people in Kazakhstan and other parts of Central Asia wanting access to a broader information-based society, there is a need to draw on resources from outside the region which may be channelled through a partnership or network to promote youth in the media.

Establishment of 'Youth in the Media Network'

A first meeting to look into the feasibility of setting up a 'Youth in the Media Network' was held on 6 October 2000 in Almaty, and was organized by UNICEF in conjunction with the Kazakh NGO 'Kid's Time'. The meeting considered the benefits of a network and how it could connect with marginalized youth. It was attended by over 20 participants, mainly young people from reporters clubs, but also mainstream media managers, representing all major geographic areas in the country. Prior to the meeting, local authorities, NGOs and other organizations throughout Kazakhstan had also been canvassed over a period of months on the idea of a network. There were numerous expressions of support, including material support from local authorities. The meeting felt that the network should ideally bring together a cluster of different partners - young reporters, media professionals and media gatekeepers. It also concluded that the necessary infrastructure and interest was in place for a network to develop and called on UNICEF to support its establishment. We are now in the process of working out with our NGO partner the most effective way of setting up the network, especially given the limited amount of funding available for this project. Internet access is perceived as the number one priority for the young people, and we are considering how to go about doing this in an equitable fashion.

Moldova

Quarterly Newsletter *Why? The Rights of the Child*

A quarterly newsletter *Why? The Rights of the Child* is edited by young reporters -- volunteers of the "Information and Documentation Centre on Child Rights," with UNICEF support. The newsletter includes information on child rights, youth activities, children participation projects, and cooperation among youth NGOs. It is written by young reporters and distributed by child rights volunteers to schools and all project sites. UNICEF provided journalism training for the students involved in editing the newsletter. The project is being developed in partnership with Radda Barnen, Sweden.

Radio Dialogue with Children

A monthly direct on-line dialogue with children on National Radio is hosted by the 'Children's Hour' programme and run by the Law Department university students, trained in child rights. Young people answer on-line to questions and involve children in a debate regarding child rights. The programme aims to stimulate children's abilities to express themselves, promoting child participation and providing children with appropriate information on specific issues.

Students' Newsletters Project

The students' newsletters project is being implemented for the third year in cooperation with the Independent Journalism Centre. It includes training and consultation in journalism for high school students who are currently producing, or are planning to produce newspapers in different regions of the country. For 2001, the project foresees the elaboration of a manual for publishing students' newspapers, summer school activities for young reporters, and mini-grants for school newspapers.

Romania

ICDB

Contest on children's rights issues. A cooperation with PRO TV (private television in Romania) *Abracadabra* (children's programme) in order to promote children's rights through the mass media. The children had the opportunity to interview local officials, teachers, and doctors and to send a tape in order to participate in the contest for the best interview. For two months, PRO TV presented UNICEF cartoons on the theme of children's rights.

Training for Journalists

Between 12 and 18 of March 2001, UNICEF conducted two courses for 55 journalists on Mass Media and Children's Rights, which was facilitated by the PressWise Trust from the UK. It was the first time in Romania that journalists covering social issues were encouraged to think very seriously about the Convention on the Rights of the Child before writing stories about children.

Television Education

We will organize a series of weekly national TV broadcasts on education for Roma children (presentation of successful stories).

HIV/AIDS

30-second TV spot for condoms in order to prevent HIV/AIDS among the young generation. This TV spot was prepared by UNICEF and PSI. Television is still one of the most important sources of information on HIV/AIDS for young Romanians.

Russia

Pionerskaya Pravda

Pionerskaya Pravda is a children's newspaper founded in March 1925. For many years it has remained the main weekly publication for children and youth in the Soviet Union. These days, it has a circulation of 60,000 copies, many of which are subscriptions of school libraries, making the number of actual readers much larger than this figure. About 70 per cent of all published material is written by young journalists (40 of them are Moscow-based and approximately 160 are working in the country's other 88 regions) making the newspaper a unique tribune for expressing children's and youth's voices, opinions and concerns nationwide.

Younpress

Younpress is a Russian news agency for news and information. The Youth Information Centre consists of a TV-studio, newspaper, magazine and Internet site for young people (www.glasnet.ru/~ynpress/eng/index.html). Their website describes them as an information agency by and for young people. It has its own newspaper, *Ynosheskaya gazeta* and literary journal *Nedorosl*. The agency helps Russian youth to learn about youth news, facts, child law and to try journalism for themselves. The agency hosts an annual arts festival, 'Children for Children,' in which talented boys and girls from different parts of Russia may sing, dance, play an instrument, etc. The agency also organizes a 'School of the Young Journalist', where young journalists from Russia and other countries are brought together for a week to make contact and share experiences. *Younpress* representatives take part in similar sessions abroad, in conferences on teen problems, childhood issues, youth media, etc.

Ukraine

Network of Youth Information Centres

A number of workshops for professional journalists and young journalists have been conducted. Young people were able to produce their own videos and express their views, seeking, receiving and imparting information in the partnership with mass media.

Media Awards for Best Reporting on Children's Rights

Media awards for the best reporting on children's and adolescents' rights (the first was conducted in 1998) is planned again this year. The media competition of animation films, video, audio and printed materials on the theme of children's rights will be open to both professional and young journalists. A set of

information materials on CRC will be produced for further dissemination in regions. Round tables for media will be conducted.

Youth Wireless Information and Advocacy Agency

The Youth Wireless Information and Advocacy Agency will be established this year to encourage ways in which adolescents can share ideas, be listened to and deliver their messages to the public by establishing websites and through the regular delivery of information to local and national media. Computer networking among local youth groups will be established and a website will be developed and introduced to the general public. The children will participate in the web discussions and share their opinions. They will address authorities with their hopes and concerns. This efficient system of information gathering and dissemination will be established this year.

Uzbekistan

FM Youth Radio Stations

There are several FM youth radio stations operating with the support of international organizations, such as Internews. They include:

‘Uzbeq Taronalari’ and ‘Grand’ – the most popular;
‘Area Dano,’ ‘Sezam,’ ‘Yoshlar’ and ‘Khamrokh’ – started more recently.

All are broadcast in Russian and Uzbek, although ‘Yoshlar’ and ‘Khamrokh’ are more ethnic with more programmes in Uzbek and more ethnic music.

Gender Innovations and Development (GID)/UNICEF Activities

Gender Innovations and Development (GID), a non-governmental organization (NGO) in Uzbekistan working with UNICEF, has implemented various activities in Uzbekistan relating to young people in the media. They have also worked with other UNICEF partners during the past year. The following is a list of some of the activities:

- *A journalism class for youth was started by Galina, the founder of Gender Innovations and Development, which became a UNICEF project called ‘Youth Will Change the World.’ Many of the young people on this training scheme eventually decided to start careers in theatre, philology and journalism. The young people were trained by experts on how to shoot films, write scripts, produce quality video footage, edit and take photographs. One of their most talented students produced a documentary called, I love you which deals with gender parity in this country.*
- *Young journalists were assisted by a local producer in developing healthy lifestyle video spots. The young people wrote the scripts and two were selected for screening on local television. This project was financed by TACIS.*
- *With support from the Government of Netherlands, GID invited a producer from Holland to teach and discuss all aspects of film-making by children. As a result of this, GID students shot footage on ‘Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances’ (Children and young people living and working on the streets, and children in*

Orphanage No. 21 in Tashkent). They are working with this consultant to determine what the next steps in this area should be.

- *Uzbekistan Television has done a programme on youth organizations called Voice of Youth, a seven-minute spot made by children. A mobile exhibition called 'World Through the Eyes of Youth,' is now on display at the Youth Theatre in Tashkent.*
- *GID worked with another NGO called Rabat Malik on a film called Dream of the Rural Young, about a girl living in Bukhara, an ancient town and historic site which still has a thriving traditional community. This project involved numerous representatives from the village, as well as local government in Bukhara.*
- *A documentary was made about street children in Uzbekistan called Cocoon. This powerful film describes the everyday life of young people living and/or working on the streets of Tashkent. It is a sensitively created story about street children, describing their struggles, their survival strategies and how they find strength and solidarity through their peers.*
- *The World Water Day poster for 2001 was created by a young artist whose work was chosen from a group of young people who have been learning how to paint posters.*
- *UNICEF- CARK sponsored 'Youth in the Media', a journalists' training programme for Central Asia. Two young people from GID attended.*
- *Gender Innovations and Development is assisting in the Global Movement for Children Campaign by designing an advocacy promotion for 'Say Yes to Children.' This will involve the creation of films and paintings by young people to be used for advocacy.*

APPENDIX 3:
MEDIA EXPERTS QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Colleague,

InterMedia would like to invite you to participate in a study of young people and the media in Central and Eastern Europe, the CIS and the Baltic States that we are carrying out on behalf of UNICEF. InterMedia's task is to analyse and report current trends in media use and attitudes among young people in the 27 countries that make up the region.

Much of our analysis will be based on InterMedia's database of media surveys, carried out across the region over the past decade. At the same time, however, we would like to supplement, illustrate and animate our existing data with the knowledge, insights and experiences of professionals such as yourselves across the region.

We are therefore sending you the attached questionnaire in the hope that you will take the opportunity to send us your responses. We understand that each question could prompt lengthy and detailed responses and that you are probably very busy. That is why we would be grateful for any of your insights, no matter how brief they might be. We are very interested in your understanding of how young people use and relate to various mass media in your area, even if it is expressed in a few sentences or paragraphs. Feel free to bypass items if you have no views or comments.

We have left a limited amount of space below each question. Please use extra space, if necessary, or to add additional comments that do not necessarily relate to any specific question.

While we are unable to offer compensation to the respondents, InterMedia will acknowledge all of those who participate in this study in the final analytical report. UNICEF will circulate the report as one of its documents presented at the regional Intergovernmental, Youth and NGO Consultations that will take place this spring in preparation for the UN Special Session on Children. UNICEF will also rely on the information in the paper to assist in its establishment of a Young People's Media Network in the region.

We would very much like you to return the questionnaire to us by the end of February or the first week in March. Please e-mail your responses to Susan Gigli of InterMedia at giglis@intermedia.org. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Gigli either by e-mail or by phone (+1 202 452 9276).

Lastly, if you do not have the time to take part in this study, but know of others who might be interested and qualified, please pass on the questionnaire. We would be most grateful..

Thank you for your time and for sharing your expertise.

Young People and the Media in the CEE/CIS and Baltics Region

Respondent Name: _____

Respondent Title: _____

Respondent Organization: _____

Respondent Country or Areas of Expertise: _____

Respondent telephone number: _____

Respondent e-mail: _____

As you answer the questions below, please keep in mind that by young people we mean those aged 10-24, with an emphasis on those 15-24. In addition, in your responses, please distinguish between domestic and foreign media whenever appropriate.

You should also be aware that UNICEF is approaching this study from a child's rights perspective as defined by the United Nation's Convention on Rights of the Child. Specifically, this Convention sets out what governments and individuals should do to promote and protect the human rights of all children. Unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989, it has since been ratified by all the world's governments, except for two. Ratification means that governments commit themselves to ensuring that children can grow up in safe and supportive conditions, with access to high quality education and health care, and a good standard of living. It means governments agree to protect children from discrimination, sexual and commercial exploitation and violence, and to take particular care of orphans and young refugees. It is also an acknowledgement that children have the right:

- to express opinions, especially about decisions that affect them;
- to freedom of thought, expression, conscience and religion;
- to a private life and the right to play;
- to form their own clubs and organizations;
- to have access to information, particularly from the state and the media;
- to make ideas and information known themselves.

Media professionals are well placed to scrutinise the efforts of all concerned and to challenge those who fail to comply with the Convention.

I. Young People's Media Consumption Habits Since the Fall of the Berlin Wall

(We are looking for an overview.)

- What would you say have been the major changes or trends in young people's media consumption habits since the fall of the Berlin Wall? For each of the trends you identify, please explain why you think they have occurred.
- In what ways are young people's present media consumption habits different from young people's habits during the communist period? Once again, please identify major differences and explain how these habits are different and why.
- To what extent have trends in young people's media use in your area been similar to and/or different from trends in Western Europe? Again, please identify and provide explanations for major similarities and/or differences.

II. Young People's Attitudes toward the Mass Media

- How would you characterise the most prevalent attitudes toward mass media among young people today? *(Please distinguish between domestic and foreign media.)*
- Would you say that young people generally find some media more credible and trustworthy than others? If so, which do they find most/least credible and trustworthy and why?
- Do you think that young people generally feel that they have greater access to high quality and diverse sources of information today than they had 5 to 10 years ago? Why or why not?

III. Young People's Sources of Information

- What type of information are young people generally interested in?
- Which are young people's preferred sources of information?
- Which specific entertainment media do young people generally follow and why?
- To what degree do you think the entertainment media is defining young people's sense of identity, style, values and attitudes?

- Are there different youth sub-cultures (*i.e.*, *skinheads*, *heavy metal fans*, “*greens*”) that follow different media? Please elaborate.
- What do you see as the positive influences of mass media on youth? What do you see as the negative influences? (*Please distinguish between domestic and foreign media.*)
- Do you think young people today are more or less interested in political events than the youth of 10 years ago? Please explain.

IV. Portrayal of Young People in the Mass Media

- How would you say young people are stereotyped in the mass media? (*For example, are they shown only as victims and problems?*)
- Are there any positive images of young people in the mass media? If so, what are they?
- Are there any positive role models for young people shown regularly in the mass media? If so, which?
- Which issues, if any, does the mass media communicate effectively to young people?

V. Media Aimed at Young People

- Are there any programmes or publications that are targeted specifically at young people? If so, what are they and of what quality are they in your judgment? (*Please comment on their strengths and weaknesses*)
- What characterises youth programmes in your country/region? (*for example, what subjects/issues do they cover, what type of people do they feature, what is their style and tone*)
- Are programmes for youth readily available on TV and/or radio? When do they usually air and how much airtime do they usually have?

VI. Media Projects Involving Young People

- Are you aware of any media projects that involve young people as writers, reporters, actors, producers, etc.? If so, what are they and how successful have they been in your view?
- For each media project involving young people that you are aware of, could you please provide the name, contact information and a brief description of the project. UNICEF will use this information to start compiling a database of such projects.

Project Name	Contact Information	Brief Description

- How helpful do you think such projects have been both for the young people themselves and for the country/general good?

VII. Information “Haves” and “Have-nots”

- Would you say that there are information “haves” and “have-nots” among young people in your country/region today? If so, who are the “haves” and who are the “have-nots”?
- What are the reasons for this informational divide? (*For example, are there some young people who cannot afford access to certain types of information or who are simply too busy with daily survival to have the time to access information? Are there some groups — such as minorities, who are excluded from today’s mass media?*)

VIII. Young People and the Internet

Regarding users of the Internet among young people:

- Who is generally attracted to the Internet?
- Who has access?

- What do they generally use it for?
- Where do they usually access it? (*school, friends' homes, work, libraries, cafes, etc.*)
- Who are the “Internet entrepreneurs” who are creating web pages, companies, etc.?
- Is the Internet contributing to a certain youth culture?
- Is the Internet a source of employment for young people, or will it soon be?
- Do media start-ups have any chance of finding a profitable niche?

Regarding Internet non-users:

- Who are the non-users?
- Are these young people non-users by choice or do they face obstacles in accessing and/or using the Internet? Which obstacles do they face?
- How likely is it that these non-users will become users?

IX. State of Journalism and Communications Training

- In your country or region, how does a young person prepare for a career in media/journalism today?
- How does this compare to journalism training under communism and what are the main reasons for the differences?
- What is the quality of journalism training today?
- Do young people find a career in media/journalism attractive? Why or why not?

- What types of young people does media/journalism work attract?

X. Importance of Young People to Development of Democratic, Independent Media

- What would you say are young people's expectations of the media today in terms of balance of information, accuracy, objectivity, role in society?
- As the first generation to reach adulthood since the fall of the Berlin Wall, do you think that young people today will push for the strengthening of democratic, independent media in their countries? Why or why not?
- What needs to be done—perhaps in terms of policies or programmes—that would help to empower young people in your country/region through various forms of media? (*Look for issues of access, training, exchange programmes, career opportunities, support for young people's media groups, etc.*)
- Do you think that media savvy young people in your country/area would be interested in communicating through various media channels with other such young people in their own country, in neighbouring countries or in their region, and/or in Western countries? Please explain.

Other comments: