**MEDIA CRISIS IN DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES - ARE THEY FREE OR POLITICALLY CONDITIONED (Croatia case)**

**ABSTRACT**

The Ministry of Culture in 2013 conducts research on the media situation, and in 2015 begins discussions on media policy and adopts ten documents that serve as the basis for media policies in the Republic of Croatia in the period 2015 to 2020.

It is impossible to argue that only economic crisis is the cause of the crisis in the media, although there is a link because the decrease in the number of advertisements in the media has also led to a decrease in the number of employees. Fewer journalists in newsrooms have affected the decline in the quality of news articles, and the expansion of social media and the strengthening of online portals have directed journalism in another direction.

Erosion of the democratic function of the media is a term that we come across today when we speak in a "crisis" or situation in the media. Although several thematic protests have been held by the Croatian Journalist Society, a general protest called "You kidnapped the media, we don't give journalism" was organized in March 2019. The protest was intended to deliver to the Government of eight claims relating to the largest number of lawsuits, political PR and prints and advertisers' pressures, threats against journalists, jeopardizing the professional rights and standards, failure to comply with media laws and the lack of serious media policy.

Although the debate on media policy, in the framework of the start, ending in 2020. Godin e journalists themselves referred to the lack of adequate strategies. Given the end of the five-year media policy debate period, a recapitulation of the past period will be made through the paper. Is all of the above a cause of further media crisis and erosion of media function, the authors will endeavour to determine through the work. For the paper, a survey was conducted among journalists available through the LinkedIn social network. Equally, a comparison will be made with the initial state of the media policy debate and the results obtained will be compared. Following the slogan of the protest, an attempt will be made to answer who abducted the media and what is the rating of journalism in Croatia.

**Keywords**: media crisis, journalism crisis, erosion of media function, media policies