

KOSOVO'S DEVELOPING FREE PRESS:
HOW DO NEWSPAPERS IN A TRANSITIONING SOCIETY BEHAVE UNDER
INTERNATIONAL SUPERVISION AND WHAT ROLE DO THEY PLAY DURING
LOCAL ELECTIONS?

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the extent to which political party affiliations affect the news coverage of six daily Kosovar newspapers. The study was conducted following the declaration of independence on February 17, 2008 by the Kosovo Assembly. The study sought to examine the coverage of policies that were dependant on domestic institutions. Through the application of textual analysis, media framing was discerned based on a comparison between two time periods when different government structures were in power, 2004 and 2007. Moreover, the study expanded on the results based on semi-structured interviews with the editors in chief of the daily newspapers.

Overall, the study's results show that the Kosovar daily newspapers fail to keep government fractions to a high degree of accountability. The general tendency was to merely replicate party members' rhetoric during their election campaigns. Rarely did the newspaper challenge such claims or reference to the political party's performance during their mandate. Accountability was generally sought through party attacks on one another, and depending on the daily, such frames tended to be were subject to the newspaper's political affiliation. The study holds that opportunities for more thorough and informative coverage did exist.