

Almost 1.4 million euros from the state budget was allocated last year to media outlets spreading fake news – through public tenders and contracts

*In 2024, the publishers of six pro-government tabloids – Informer, Alo, Kurir, Srpski telegraf, Večernje novosti, and Politika – received contracts worth **nearly 1.4 million euros** from state institutions, despite their ongoing violations of journalistic ethics through the spread of disinformation, manipulation of facts, and targeted attacks.*

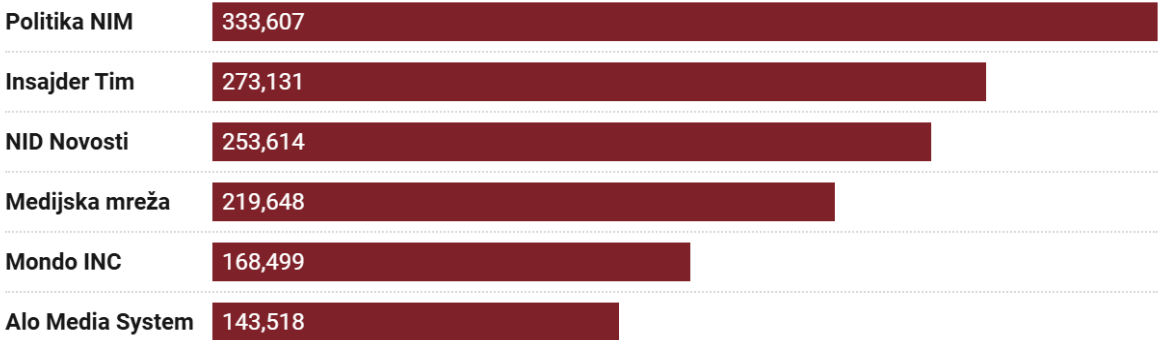
*The majority of this amount – **around 1.1 million euros** – was allocated through advertising contracts, while the **remaining 290,000 euros** came from public media funding competitions. At the same time, these outlets engage in near-daily manipulation: on their front pages alone, they published [more than 1,400 biased, unfounded, and manipulative stories](#).*

Written by: Milica Blagojević

As in previous years, loyalty to the ruling party (SNS) paid off – the main pro-regime mouthpieces were once again generously rewarded from the public funds.

This year's analysis by Raskrikavanje also included contracts signed by the publishers of six daily newspapers without any prior tender procedures. Of the **1.1 million euros** (from advertising contracts) in total, **around 703,000 euros** were awarded through public tenders, while **approximately 398,000 euros** were allocated without a competitive process, according to data from the public procurement portal.

The most valuable contracts for these media outlets came from Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), which awarded **128,000 euros**, the State Lottery of Serbia, with **116,000 euros**, and the Electric Power Industry of Serbia (EPS), with **93,000 euros**.



Amounts are presented in euros.

***Politika* and *Večernje novosti* – More than a half million euros under the same roof**

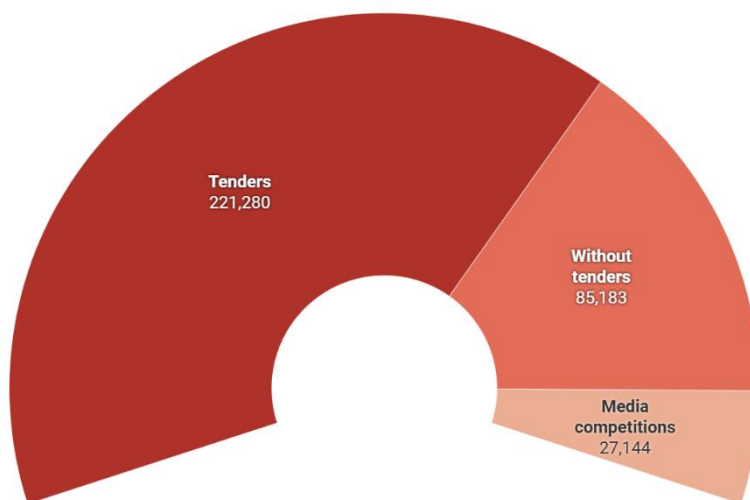
The companies behind Serbia’s two oldest daily newspapers – *Politika* and *Večernje novosti* – received more than half a million euros in 2024. Their owner is Boban Rajić, once an unknown businessman from Smederevo, now a media mogul. [As reported by Raskrikavanje](#), a few years ago Rajić bought the Borba printing company – which owned *Novosti* – through his firm, *Media 026*, for around 2.5 million euros.

The registration of the company was handled by [lawyer Igor Isailović](#), known to be close to government figures Siniša Mali and Ana Brnabić. After acquiring *Večernje novosti*, Rajić bought a 50% stake in *Politika* in 2022 and later took full ownership of the paper. He also owns the *Politika* building in downtown Belgrade.

Of all the media outlets covered in the analysis, the company *Politika novine i magazini* received the largest amount of state funding. Over the past year, the state and state-owned companies have awarded it contracts worth **more than 333,000 euros**.

A smaller portion of this funding – “**only**” **27,000 euros** – came through media funding competitions. The Ministry of Information and Telecommunications allocated **23,000 euros** to *Politika* for projects focused on youth mental health and recognizing the dangers of online abuse. The remaining funds came from the cities of Kragujevac and Smederevo.

Advertising contracts awarded through public procurement procedures accounted for **more than 221,000 euros**. The Ministry of Culture stood out, awarding *Politika* a contract worth over 51,000 euros for advertising services. In addition, *Politika* received **another 85,000 euros** through direct contracts without public tenders.



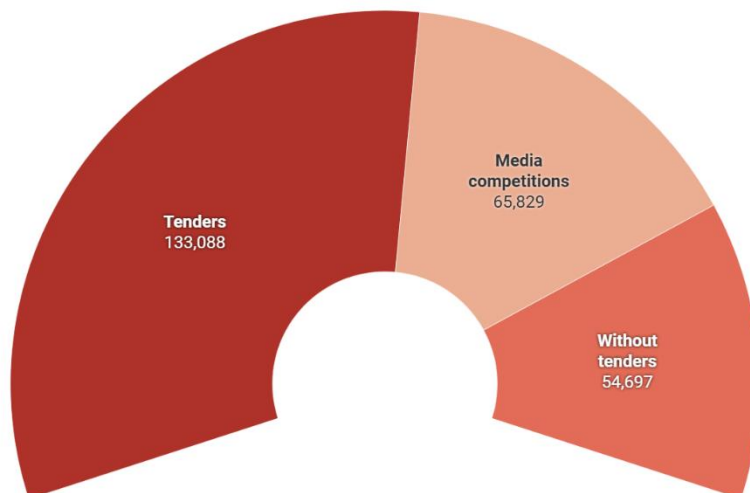
Amounts are presented in euros.

The company *NID Novosti* also maintained a “productive” relationship with the state. *Večernje novosti*, published by this company, received contracts worth **around 253,000 euros** last year for various media projects, advertising, and promotional services.

Public tenders secured contracts for *Novosti* totaling **133,000 euros** in 2024. The Ministry of Environmental Protection stood out by awarding a **36,000-euro contract** for “public information services in daily newspapers.”

Through advertising procurements that were exempt from the Public Procurement Law – meaning they were conducted without open tenders – *Novosti* received an **additional 54,000 euros**.

They were also granted **over 65,000** euros through media funding competitions. For projects such as “Belgrade Through Time,” “The Life of Belgrade,” and “Belgrade Tailored to Its Citizens,” the City of Belgrade awarded contracts worth **more than 42,000 euros**. The cities of Šabac and Kragujevac, along with the Ministry of Information and Telecommunications, provided an **additional 23,000 euros** in total.



Amounts are presented in euros.

***Informer* – Valuable contracts for the government's loud activists**

Targeting the opposition, activists, and other public figures critical of the current government has proven highly profitable for the company *In sajder Tim*, which publishes *Informer*. In 2024 alone, this company received state contracts worth **approximately 273,000 euros** – despite *Informer* publishing at least 384 manipulative and false stories on its front pages that year, according to [Raskrikavanje's research](#).

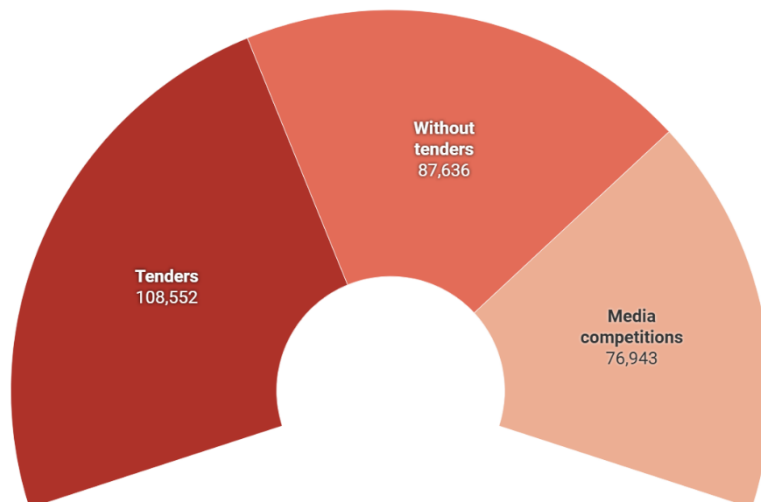
The majority of the funds came through advertising service contracts awarded via public procurement procedures, totaling **around 196,000 euros**. Of this amount, **more than**

108,000 euros came from tenders, while **over 87,000 euros** came from direct, non-tendered agreements.

The largest single advertiser was the State Lottery of Serbia, which awarded **nearly 35,000 euros** to *Informer's* publisher. Additional contracts were signed with smaller local governments, such as the municipality of Kula (**around 14,000 euros**) and Vrnjačka Banja (**over 10,000 euros**).

In addition to *Insajder Tim*, which is majority-owned by *Informer's* editor-in-chief Dragan J. Vučićević, his other company – *Info IT Media* – also received funding from a local media competition. The City of Belgrade allocated **nearly 77,000 euros** to these two companies for projects titled “I Can Do It Too,” “Learning Through Play,” and “For Belgrade to Breathe Clean Air.”

Like *Novosti*, *Informer* is widely known for publishing false claims and manipulative content favoring the ruling authorities. According to [Raskrikavanje's analysis](#), the two outlets often collaborate, frequently quoting and backlinking to each other's content.



Amounts are presented in euros.

***Srpski telegraf* – Hundreds of thousands of euros for a media outlet that has more than 250 front pages with President Vučić's face**

The publisher of *Srpski telegraf* and the news portal *Republika*, the company *Medijska mreža*, was awarded contracts worth **just under 220,000 euros**. This tabloid was no exception when it came to sensationalist reporting and reinforcing pro-government narratives. In the past year alone, President Vučić appeared on their front pages 259 times.

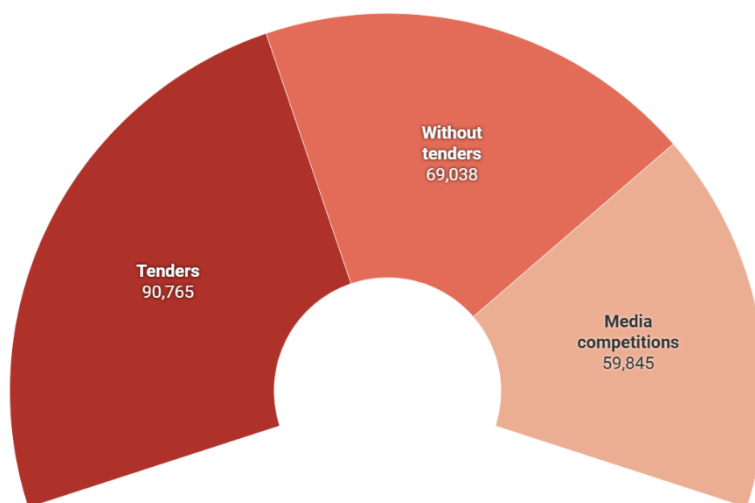
Unlike *Večernje novosti*, *Medijska mreža* had fewer projects funded through public media competitions, but they were nearly as financially rewarding. Through media funding

competitions, the City of Belgrade awarded the company **nearly 60,000 euros** for two projects – “Get to Know Belgrade’s Institutions” and “Cultural Belgrade Through the Lens.”

Through public tenders, *Srpski telegraf* received **over 90,000 euros**. As with *Informer*, its most lucrative contract came from the State Lottery of Serbia, worth **around 21,000 euros**. For contracts awarded without a public tender, the amount **totaled 69,000 euros**.

The owners of *Medijska mreža* are Lazar Simić (40%), and Milan Lađević and Saša Milovanović (each holding 30%). According to the [Crime and Corruption Investigating Network \(KRIK\)](#), Simić is a lawyer who, in 2015, was authorized to represent the current President of the National Assembly and ex-prime-minister Ana Brnabić’s company, and also worked in the office of Igor Isailović.

Isailović is a lawyer known to be close to current Minister of Finance Siniša Mali. In 2015, he co-founded the company *Energy & Innovation* together with Ana Brnabić.



Amounts are presented in euros.

***Kurir*'s Publisher Received the Most From Radio Television of Serbia – Nearly 50,000 euros**

The company *Mondo INC*, which publishes the daily paper *Kurir* and the news portal *Mondo*, received contracts **totaling 168,000 euros**. The most lucrative agreement was with Radio Television of Serbia (RTS), which allocated **47,000 euros** for advertising its program on the *Mondo* and *Kurir* portals.

Mondo INC was awarded **nearly 118,000 euros** through public tenders. Additionally, the company received **over 34,000 euros** through public procurement agreements, bypassing formal tender procedures.

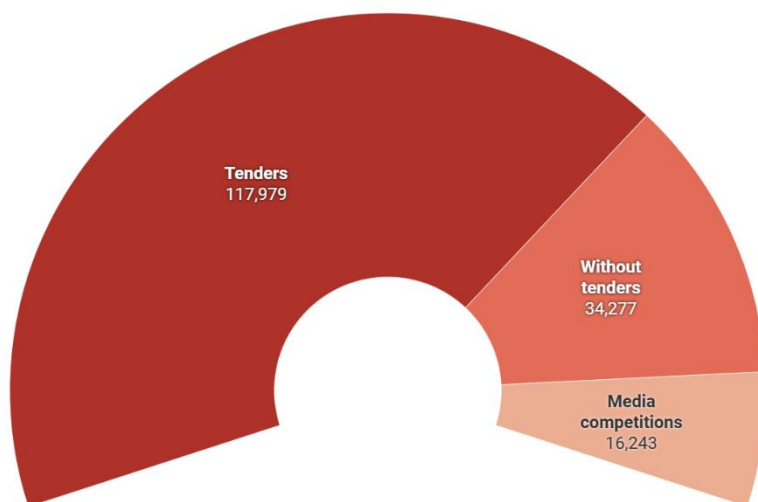
After RTS, the next most profitable contract came from the Electric Power Industry of Serbia (EPS) – a **25,000-euro deal** for “advertising in print and online media with national coverage.”

According to the data we collected, the least profitable channel for *Mondo INC* were media funding competitions, through which the company received **just over 16,000 euros** across five projects. The Ministry of Information and Telecommunications provided the largest share – **around 8,500 euros** – for a project titled “Path to Family: Adoption of Children in Serbia.”

Businessman Igor Žeželj is the owner of *Wireless Media*, which owns *Mondo INC*. In 2018, Serbia’s state-owned telecommunications provider *Telekom* invested 38 million euros into this company – a detail revealed in 2020 when Marinika Tepić, vice president of the *Party of Freedom and Justice*, presented the contract to journalists. Raskrikavanje had [already reported on this](#).

Coincidentally or not, after *Telekom's* investment, Žeželj purchased *Adria Media Group*, then the publisher of *Kurir*. According to the 2018 contract, *Telekom* had the right to request that Žeželj sell them *Mondo INC* after five years. Just before the expiration of that five-year agreement, *Adria Media Group* was shut down and *Mondo INC* became *Kurir's* new official publisher.

Telekom does intend to go through with the acquisition: in July last year, [it notified the North Macedonian antitrust commission](#) of its plan to take over *Mondo INC*. The Commission for Protection of Competition in North Macedonia approved the deal in August, and Montenegro’s Competition Protection Agency [later followed suit](#).



Amounts are presented in euros.

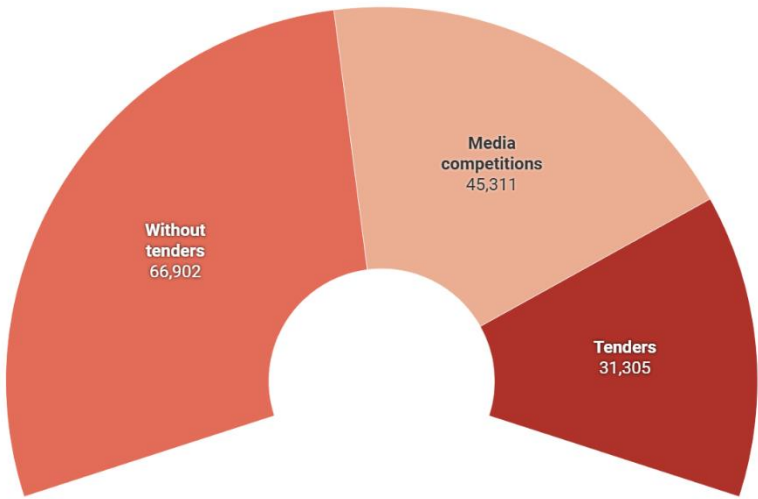
Alo collected just over 143,000 euros – The most modest sum compared to competitors

According to the data we collected, the publisher of the tabloid *Alo* – the company *Alo Media System* – fared the “worst” among its peers in 2024, receiving contracts worth over **143,000 euros** from cities, municipalities, and state-owned companies through public procurement and media funding competitions.

Through public procurement alone, *Alo* secured contracts worth **98,000 euros**. Of this, **31,000 euros** came from tenders, while **nearly 67,000 euros** were awarded through non-tendered agreements. In comparison to other media outlets included in the analysis, this funding model proved less lucrative for *Alo*.

This shortfall was partially offset by media funding competitions, which brought *Alo* an **additional 45,000 euros** in contracts. Almost all of this money came from the City of Belgrade for a project titled “New Energy of Belgrade,” while a much smaller amount – **just 2,560 euros** – came from the city of Užice for the project “Užice, the Pride of Serbia.”

The tabloid *Alo* is 100% owned by Saša Blagojević, who, in addition to this outlet, controls parts of several other media entities – including *Studio B* television, *TDI Radio*, and *Radio Karolina*. Blagojević remains a virtually unknown figure in the media industry and rarely appears in public.



Amounts are presented in euros.