

EDITORIAL

Dear readers, the issue before your eyes introduces several papers from the international conference under the name of **Comments, Hate Speech, Disinformation, and Public Communication Regulation**, held in Zagreb on September 16 and 17, 2021. The conference was organized by the Media Research journal and the Agency for Electronic Media. The key topic of the conference was the question of whether and how the legislation and regulation of the public communication space can and should contribute to the prevention of misuse of information and communication technology resources and data. When it comes to freedom of speech and censorship, citizens' rights to information, media literacy, net neutrality and informed public discussion, as well as protection from offensive, repugnant and hateful speech, are all but clearly defined.

We start off with an interview with the commencement speaker, the renowned professor **Paolo Mancini** from the Department of Political Science of the University of Perugia, conducted by a member of the editorial board of Media Research. Professor Mancini co-wrote the book *Comparison of Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* alongside Dan Hallin. The book was published in 2004, almost twenty years ago, and it is one of the pillars of communication theory as a seminal study in the field of international comparative media system research. We were interested in Professor Mancini's outlook on contemporary media systems with regard to the new communication systems, which include digital media in addition to traditional ones, as well as his stance on the possibilities of public communication regulation in such "hybrid" systems. The interview was conducted by Nada Zgrabljic Rotar.

In his article called *Governing Through Hate: Discourse Strategies Used by AKP Elites on Twitter to Justify the Decision of Withdrawal From the Istanbul Convention*, Hasan Turgut analyzes the deeply rooted polarization in Turkish society, which has been brought to light after Turkey's withdrawal from the Istanbul Convention in March 2021. The objective of the paper is to lay bare the use of social networks and hate speech during the social turmoil in the crossfire of Neo-Ottomanism and Kemalist secularism. The study foresees the strengthening of authoritarianism and the problematic discursive trends of social communication as a consequence of said issues.

Mirjana Nikolić's paper, *Democratic Legislation and Dystopian Practice in the Field of Electronic Media: Serbia 2000-2021*, provides a description of the media landscape in Serbia, with particular emphasis on mass media regulations. The analysis of the situation shows Serbia's decline in terms of the electronic media regulation and independence of regulatory authorities during the seven years leading up to the study. Although the legal solutions are properly defined, the author concludes

that their application is not consistent, which puts the media in a bad position, as well as undermines human rights and freedom.

Tanja Grmuša, Goran Hadžić and Artur Šilić's article *Building a Language Corpus of Hate Speech in the Croatian Media Space of Social Networks* puts emphasis on two questions: 1. Which types of hate speech are represented in the Croatian media landscape and 2. What are the possibilities of applying language technologies in recognizing and preventing the dissemination of hate speech in public space. By applying quantitative and qualitative analysis, the authors suggest possible courses of further development in research.

Tamara Kunić analyzes *Hostility Towards Women in Readers' Comments on Croatian News Sites*. Numerous studies have shown that readers' comments on news sites and social networks contain unacceptable speech, including hate speech against women. This paper deals with this type of communication on two Croatian news sites – index.hr and 24sata.hr. The results of the analysis of 5041 readers' comments have bright to light that readers express mostly negative sentiment when it comes to violence against women, with indication of misogynistic rhetoric.

In their article under the name of *Foreign Norm Entrepreneurs' Mis- and Disinformation Narratives on LGBT+ in Europe*, Cecilia Strand and Jakob Svensson analyze narratives that demonstrate resistance to the realization of equal rights for LGBT+ communities, which are particularly prominent in the media system of Central and Eastern Europe. According to their study, the aforementioned narratives are related to: 1. Opposition to gender ideology, 2. Heteroactivism and re-establishment of the "natural" order, 3. "Western colonialism" and 4. Children's rights. The conclusion discusses possible strengthening of the potential for creating a system for detecting disinformation or misinformation in the media space.

Nika Đuho, Marija Žagmešter and Matea Škomrlj, in the article *Media Coverage During the First Wave of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Croatia*, present the results of an empirical study in which 620 respondents participated via an online survey. The aim of the study was to determine the perception of media coverage and its impact on socially responsible behavior during the first wave of the COVID -19 pandemic. Based on the theories of mediatization and risk theory, the authors present findings suggesting that positive audience perceptions and trust are more pronounced toward traditional media such as television, despite the fact that most of them are informed via the Internet. Greater trust in media coverage was expressed by female respondents, older people, and respondents with lower levels of education.

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