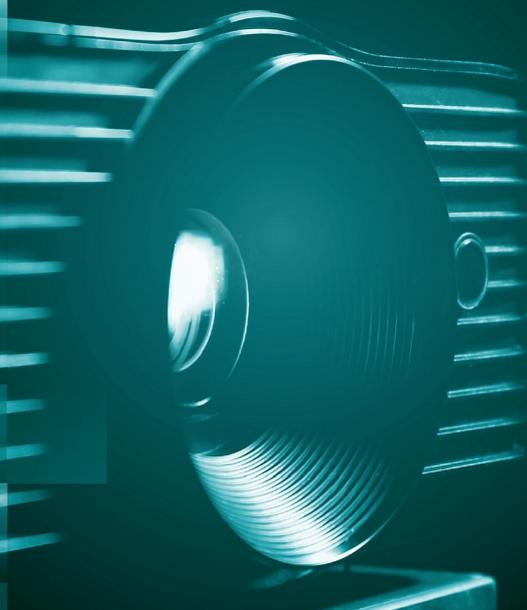




**TINA BETTELS-SCHWABBAUER,
NADIA LEIHS, GYULA MAKSA,
DOMINIK SPECK, ANNAMÁRIA TORBÓ (eds.)**

NEW SKILLS FOR JOURNALISTS

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES FROM EUROPE



LETÖLTÉS

NEW SKILLS FOR JOURNALISTS

LETÖLTÉS 14.

TMS Studies in Media and Communication

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Preface

Professional journalists must compete with non-professional or even deliberately manipulated news; they must be reliable and trustworthy sources of news amidst contemporary information chaos and acquire the indispensable ability to make creative and responsible use of digital tools. They need to provide a counterpoint to the wealth of unverified information that affects audiences' raw emotions and tempers worldwide. In the last five years, the authors of this volume have been working hard to create innovative teaching methods and learning materials for the next generation of journalists.

The researchers and lecturers who contributed to this book are from the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, and Romania. These European countries may have different backgrounds in the journalism profession, but these countries' project representatives all share one goal: they want to have a journalism education that meets the standards that journalists need in the specific but related areas of journalism. To reach this goal, they joined forces in the framework of two Strategic Partnership Projects of the European Union.

In the first project, "NEWSREEL – New Skills for the Next Generation of Journalists" (2017-2020), they focused on four fields of journalism: (1) data journalism, (2) collaborative journalism, (3) new business models of journalism and (4) the ethical challenges of the digital public sphere. The project was implemented by the University of Pécs (Hungary) as project leader, the Erich Brost Institute, an affiliated institute of the TU Dortmund University (Germany), the ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal), and the University of Bucharest (Romania).

In the second project, "NEWSREEL2 – New Teaching Fields for the Next Generation of Journalists" (2020-2023), the scope has been broadened with nine fields: (1) storytelling in social media, (2) graphic journalism, (3) improving democratic sensibility,

(4) foreign coverage, (5) covering migration, (6) artificial intelligence and journalism, robot journalism and algorithms, (7) journalism for voice-activated assistants and devices, (8) verifying and analysing fake news, and (9) debunking disinformation. Some of the topics are mainly related to technological developments, while others are connected to the social role of journalism; these aspects are strongly intertwined in practice. The project has welcomed two more partners: The Germany-based NGO Hostwriter, an award-winning network that helps journalists collaborate across borders, and the Masaryk University in the Czech Republic.

Both projects started with a research phase to ground the subsequent development of syllabi and teaching materials¹ to be incorporated into journalism education at universities and reflect the needs of the stakeholders in the participating countries. The book's content is the results of these studies, published online in the form of two research reports. The first report, NEWSREEL, was published in the spring of 2018, and the second report, NEWSREEL2, was issued in the summer of 2021. Therefore, the content of the two parts of this book reflects the conditions of these times. The original texts have been shortened and re-edited to adapt them into the form of a book. Albeit there are many similarities regarding the structure and the methods researchers used in the case of the two reports, some differences also appear. Therefore, the results are published separately in the book (see Part 1 and Part 2), keeping their original introductions and summaries; however, the chapters are structured according to the specific journalistic fields.

In the first sections of each chapter, the authors give some general introduction to the respective fields; in the second part, they present the data gathered during their research. The research results highlight some unique and general aspects of the specific journalistic areas in the countries that have been involved. At the same time,

1 All of the materials connected to both projects, including the full research reports, syllabi and e-learning courses are available or will be available on this website: <https://newsreel.pt.e.hu/>

it is essential to note that the results were obtained as parts of curricula developing projects and not research projects, and we do not state that our outcomes represent all the institutions and cover the whole journalistic fields in the participating countries.

The authors would like to thank everyone who contributed to the research, especially those journalism educators and journalists who agreed to be interviewed (a complete list of the interviewees can be found at the end of the book). Furthermore, the editors would like to recommend the volume to everyone interested in the current trends of European journalism, but primarily to media and journalism students and lecturers. The book's content can be applied as a part of journalistic courses in Higher Educational Institutions; the authors themselves have already integrated many elements into their related seminars. In addition, all the team members would like to express their confidence that improving the skills of a new generation of European journalists will strengthen the common European democratic public sphere.

the editors and authors

Part 1:

**Challenges and Opportunities
of Digital Journalism**

Introduction

The journalism profession has radically changed in the last decades because *digitalization* requires journalists to gain new knowledge and skills. Journalism will continue to be exposed to innovation, there will be no resting phases, and journalists will have to readjust constantly. Thus, the education of journalists will have to continually make progress and adapt to the new developments in the media industry. In recent years, journalism educators have been particularly challenged by the growing importance of technical competencies, including data journalism and new media business concepts. Splendore et al. (2016: 147) consider that “current developments in data journalism prompt an increasing need among journalists – and their teachers – for new knowledge and skills”. Gillmor (2016: 816) also states that it “is vital for journalists to know how to communicate with programmers”. He also stresses the importance of teaching students to understand media business concepts, as “today’s students will be among the people who develop tomorrow’s journalism business models” (Gillmor 2016: 816).

The need for new skills is also reflected in the demands of journalism students: For example, a survey of 227 future German journalists² showed that journalism education and training in Germany could be improved, particularly regarding technical and entrepreneurial competences (Gossel 2015). Similarly, a study of journalism students’ satisfaction in Romania indicates that students want more vocational courses, related to the current developments in the field, and want to work more with technical equipment (Ionescu 2016: 132). Against this background, this research was set up in the framework of the “NEWSREEL – New Skills for the Next Generation of Journalists” project to gain insight into the status quo of innovation in journalism and academic

2 60.8% of the respondents studied journalism; the others studied other disciplines or did a traineeship (Volontariat) in a newsroom.

journalism education in four European countries with a focus on (1) data journalism, (2) collaborative journalism, (3) innovative business models, and (4) ethical challenges of the digital public sphere. The project team consists of journalism and media scholars from the University of Pécs (Hungary), the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism (Germany), the ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) and the University of Bucharest (Romania).

For each of the four countries, our research design included (1) an analysis of the curricula of six selected Bachelor's and Master's degree media and journalism programmes at public and private universities and universities of applied sciences, (2) in-depth interviews with representatives from the six chosen programmes (N=25), and (3) in-depth interviews with five to six journalists who are experienced in at least one of the four fields (N=21).³ Our research has shown that journalism education and the progress of journalism regarding our four fields are quite different in each of the four countries, but there are also many similarities.

In the following chapters, we will introduce our four foci of interest: data journalism, collaborative journalism, innovative business models and new ethical challenges for journalists. After defining each field, we will describe the general status quo of these fields in the countries being studied, then focus on the results based on the data gathered in the framework of our research. We will present our outcomes related to journalism education and media practice in separate sections. The main aim of the research has been to investigate the perceptions of journalism educators and media professionals of the technology-driven changes during recent decades. Furthermore, all interviewees were asked to discuss best-practice examples regarding our four foci of interest.

³ The interviews were conducted between February and May 2018, and the curricula analysis was made before the interviews. See the list of the analysed curricula as well as the interviewees in the annexes.

Data Journalism

Raluca Radu, Antonia Matei, Anamaria Nicola, Marian Popovici, Manuela Preoteasa, Emilia Șercan, Oscar Stănciulescu (University of Bucharest)

Defining data journalism

The digital revolution has fundamentally changed the way journalists gather, analyse, interpret and present information. The Internet has facilitated opportunities for accessing open data, government and non-government databases and software that allows the gathering and analysis of vast amounts of data, and therefore has contributed to the emergence of a new type of journalism speciality: data journalism.

One of the hopes that many authors have expressed is that data journalism might become a means to consolidate democracies, allowing journalists to execute their watchdog function (Gray et al. 2012: 7). Parasie and Dagiral (2013: 854) consider that the use of data by journalists might strengthen journalistic objectivity, hold governments to account more effectively and allow the political participation of citizens by including them in the process of data production and analysis. Furthermore, “databases are an efficient means to bring public issues to the public’s attention and thus to influence the political agenda” (Parasie and Dagiral 2013: 855).

Most authors agree that data journalism includes several operational steps, such as searching, collecting, cleaning, validating, organising, analysing, visualising, and publishing data for journalistic purposes (Berret and Phillips 2016: 15; Howard 2014: 4). In practising precision journalism, media professionals started to use social science research methods to question and present the available data. This development can be tracked from the first emergence of computer-assisted reporting and applying statistical

concepts to journalistic investigations to today's highly sophisticated software, such as web scraping tools, and routinely invoking public records law to obtain data.

Data has become an additional source of information that can “complement human witnesses, officials, and experts” (Howard 2014: 4-5). Some authors go even further in their definition and understand data as a unique source that allows journalists to investigate issues of public concern that were not accessible before: “[I]n our days, data [...] take the main role; stories can be found through data bases” (Alazañez-Cortés et al. 2017: 412). As technological development proceeds, so does data journalism. Therefore, Aron Pilhofer from *The New York Times* proposes an extended definition:

“Data Journalism is an umbrella term that, to my mind, encompasses an ever-growing set of tools, techniques, and approaches to storytelling. It can include everything from traditional computer-assisted reporting (using data as a ‘source’) to the most cutting-edge data visualization and news applications. The unifying goal is a journalistic one: providing information and analysis to help inform us all about important issues of the day.”

(quoted in Gray et al. 2012: 6)

There is a notable differentiation between the terms data and information. Data most often comes in alphanumeric symbols, numbers or letters and can be understood as “facts about processes, phenomena or elements of the real world” (Vrabec 2015: 544). Meanwhile, information is rather understood as processing, evaluating and presenting data and drawing conclusions.

Scott Klein (2016) considers that the first signs of what is now called data journalism were visible in the 19th century when the streets of New York City provided good conditions for cholera. The disease started in 1832, leaving 3,000 people dead, which increased to more than 5,000 deaths in 1849. To show the expansion of the disease, *The New York Tribune* published a chart that compared weekly cholera deaths to total

weekly deaths. The comparison helped readers see that while total deaths declined, cholera deaths were on the rise.

The story of computer-assisted reporting (CAR) began in 1952. The mathematician Grace Murray Hooper and a team of programmers in collaboration with the US television channel CBS used voting statistics from earlier elections to predict the victory of Dwight Eisenhower before voting was closed, despite the polls that indicated that Illinois Governor, Adlai Stevenson, would win. Elections are a very juicy press subject, and this desire to accurately predict the winner of the elections led in the 21st century to an almost perfect prediction about Barack Obama's first presidential bid.

Another milestone in the history of data journalism was the 1967 investigation into the causes of the Detroit riots by journalist Philip Meyer. He won the Pulitzer Prize for the *Detroit Free Press*, and soon after, he published one of the most important books about computer-assisted reporting, titled *Precision Journalism*.

“Since the 1960s, [mainly investigative, mainly US-based] journalists have sought to independently monitor power by analysing databases of public records with scientific methods. Also known as *public service journalism*, advocates of these computer-assisted techniques have sought to reveal trends, debunk popular knowledge and reveal injustices perpetrated by public authorities and private corporations.”

(Gray et al. 2012: 18)

From the mid-1990s, database-grounded journalism proliferated as more computerised data became available, first on tapes, then CD-ROMS and finally online (Parasie and Dagiral 2013: 856). One of the most important institutions that helped to promote data journalism was the establishment of NICAR (National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting) at the University of Missouri, which became a nucleus for this new type of journalistic investigation by offering training and a starting point for a

network for data journalists (Berret and Phillips 2016: 22). The rise of data journalism challenges journalistic professionals to go beyond their present abilities and embrace new opportunities:

“Regardless the type of media content, the ability to work with data should be one of the basic abilities of every media professional. A journalist must understand what the data represents, its characteristics, the way it was acquired and processed, the source it is from and what it actually means. Otherwise, there is a real risk that he will uncritically accept any figures and data and rely on their interpretation by authorities from external environment”

(Vrabec 2015: 544)

Since the mid-1990s, data has been the starting point of many investigations. Starting in the mid-2000s, some news organisations from the United States (e.g. *The New York Times*, *ProPublica*) and the United Kingdom (e.g. *The Guardian*) have hired programmers, data analysts and graphic designers to help and contribute to producing advanced and original online news products. In 2009, *The Guardian* launched its popular *Datablog*, and five years later, *The New York Times* followed with *The Upshot*. Universities, technology companies and independent software engineers have developed tools for gathering, cleaning, organising, analysing, visualising, and publishing data. The field is developing with the help of online groups, fellowships and competitions at national and international levels, and grants, such as the 2011 Knight News Challenge, which allowed 25 newsrooms across the United States to facilitate data analysis. Technological progress has decisively influenced journalism practice, and the collaboration between computer scientists and journalists changed journalistic production and consumption practices. Today, spreadsheets and databases are commonplace in newsrooms. Two recent global investigations, the Panama Papers (2016) and Paradise Papers (2017), indicate how far data journalism has evolved.

“Despite the startlingly high volume of automated stories, algorithmic reporting still remains only a minor aspect of journalism considered in the round. Yet it does highlight some difficult questions for the profession.”

(Hammond 2015: 414)

Data journalism in the participating countries

In **Romania**, stories based on data are rare and have usually been developed by non-profit media or project-based journalism. While highly profiled professionals frequently use data journalism to build a solid story, mainstream media structures (with some notable exceptions, especially in the online newsrooms) disregard data or try to manipulate it. As a technique associated primarily with investigative reporting and sometimes with economic reporting, data journalism is not exploited on a large scale in Romania. Investigative journalism, in-depth journalism, and economic journalism have significantly diminished in the mainstream media. However, major media outlets do use data journalism during election times. Although the Romanian audience and journalists are open to innovative ways of packing information, including apps and other automatized forms, one main obstacle remains: media conglomerates have an ideological message to broadcast, and no interest in investing money and human resources in more accurate, databased and, therefore, more elaborated media products.

A few influential groups of journalists act independently from the mainstream structures that dominate the Romanian media landscape. Paradoxically, small enterprises, often supported by partnering non-governmental organisations (NGOs), have been active in using data journalism in a globally competitive way. Moreover, they are highly innovative concerning their business models and their journalistic approach, namely the RISE Project, OCCRP (Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project), CRJI (Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism), CIM (Centre for International

Migration and Development), *Decât o revistă*, Casa jurnalistului (The journalists' house), and the newly-launched *Recorder*.

Only one **Hungarian** journalist is regularly working with data journalism and data visualisation tools. Attila Bátorfy works for the investigative portal *Átlátszó* and operates a blog on data journalism. In the only analysis of data journalism in the Hungarian media Bátorfy (2015) came to a conclusion that “the Hungarian content industry is basically text-based” and the online media “works still with the toolbox of the print and broadcast media”. He declares that the economic weakness of the media makes it difficult “to convince a financial director that he/she needs a journalist with special knowledge whose work cannot be measured by pieces”. The biggest news portals, *Index*⁴ and *444*, also use data visualisation in some of their articles, and some NGOs have data visualisation projects (often in cooperation with media outlets). For example, Mertek Media Monitor has a data visualisation project to show the role and changes in state advertising.⁵

The handling and the interpretation of data are becoming increasingly important in journalism in **Germany** (see, for example, Sadrozinski 2013: 93), although the number of journalists who consider themselves data journalists is still relatively low. In their explorative study on the role conceptions of data journalists Weinacht and Spiller (2013: 416) identified 35 individuals who defined their work as data journalism. A more recent overview of data journalists in Germany and Switzerland by students of the TU Dortmund University (2015) lists an additional 16 German data journalists.

4 It is important to highlight that the research was conducted before the events of the summer of 2020, when the former independent *Index* went under the control of government friendly actors. This has led to the removal of the former editor-in-chief, Szabolcs Dull. The journalists who resigned from *Index* in response to the sacking of Dull announced on their rebranded Facebook page the imminent launch of a new news website, *Telex* and they operate under this name still today. More information about the story of *Index* is available here: Polyák 2020.

5 State advertising 2006-2017, <https://mertek.atlatszo.hu/state-advertising-2006-2017/>

Data journalism in the form of visualising facts and data is not entirely new to German journalism; newspapers and news formats on TV are used to illustrate their reporting with graphics and other data-driven illustrations. However, as technological progress allows for different and interactive forms of data mining and visualisation, the number of media outlets experimenting with data journalism is rising. Interestingly, most data journalism teams in Germany are led by women (Matzat 2015: 262). The content of data driven reporting ranges from political reporting, such as elections results, and ecological problems such as air pollution, to local stories such as the development of housing rental prices, and entertainment such as the strike rate of soccer celebrities. The field is still an emerging one, but the body of research (Rinsdorf 2016; Wormer 2017; Castell et al. 2018), and teaching material online and in print, is growing (e.g. Sturm 2013).

In **Portuguese** newsrooms, data journalism is not a common practice. This kind of journalism is at a very undeveloped stage in theory and practice. A Master's thesis on the subject (Pinto-Martinho 2013) reports that only some newsrooms have recognised the importance of data journalism. One of the main problems is the lack of conceptual and technical skills for the practice of data journalism.

RESEARCH RESULTS FROM THE CURRICULA ANALYSIS AND THE INTERVIEWS

Data journalism in journalism education

As the curricula analysis shows, the University of Bucharest and the Babeş-Bolyai University have the most extensive course offers concerning data journalism in **Romania**. The institutions offer basic and advanced elements in the field of data

gathering. The Lucian Blaga University and West University of Timișoara do not aim to propose a specialisation in data journalism, they offer only fundamentals as their lecturers think a basic introduction is enough. To date, Spiru Haret University does not run a course in data journalism.

Examples of data journalism courses are ‘Advanced techniques of data gathering’ (University of Bucharest), ‘Data journalism and Digital Data Analysis’ (Babeș-Bolyai University), and ‘Data gathering techniques’ (West University of Timișoara). At the Faculty of Journalism and Communication Studies at the University of Bucharest, there are data journalism courses both at Bachelor’s and Master’s level. The data journalism teacher has a professional background as both a practitioner and an academic. For the Bachelor’s students, the course is elective and quite popular among the students. At Master’s level, in the political journalism programme, the course has been compulsory since 2017. The Journalism and Communication Sciences Department at the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University also offers a data journalism course.

“Due to the latest developments in journalism, we needed to introduce a data journalism course. My colleagues supported the introduction of such a course. I think it is an asset for journalists if they have training also in data journalism, as thus they have more working tools”.

Alexandru Lăzescu, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University

At the Lucian Blaga University, on the other hand, there are no special courses in data journalism, but some elements are integrated into the online journalism course.

In **Hungary**, data journalism as an independent course is only available at the Budapest Metropolitan University and Eötvös Loránd University, and the same data journalist (Attila Bátorfy) teaches students in both institutions. These courses concentrate on journalistic skills rather than IT skills. However, there are some elements of this specific field that are also taught in the other programmes, integrated

into other courses. At Debrecen, Péter Szirák and his team have tried to build the use of data visualisation software into the ‘Presentation technologies’ course. However, the revolutionary professional challenges, such as algorithmic journalism, are not part of the curriculum, because there is not a large enough labour market demand for that, even though processes are moving in this direction. At the Pázmány Péter Catholic University students have the possibility to learn about infographics which has been integrated into the course ‘Multimedia content creation’. At Szeged although there is a demand for a data journalism course, there is no personnel available to teach it. Zsolt Szijártó (University of Pécs) is of the opinion that data journalism and other specific fields should become institutionalised at Master’s level.

All six **German** journalism programmes under study here offer courses on data journalism. However, the range of intensity and the amount of acquired knowledge and practice is very varied. While the B.A. in science journalism at the TU Dortmund University⁶ offers data journalism as a second subject, and therefore dedicates about one-half of the study time to dealing with data, the other faculties offer modules or workshops or integrate aspects of data journalism into other courses.

Teaching data journalism generally means understanding the phenomenon of datafication and its influences on journalism. This includes: the basics of statistics (to rate and clean up data), ways of gathering data, the use of different tools like data bases and software, basic coding skills (mostly with R), storytelling based on statistics, the use of visualisation tools, and the implementation of the acquired knowledge in the framework of data journalism projects. Some departments teach statistics as an introduction to academic work and research in communication science, students then have to transfer this knowledge themselves to data journalism. However, even students of the B.A. data journalism programme at Dortmund need to further

6 Besides data journalism, science journalism students can choose natural sciences or technical journalism as a second subject. The Institute of Journalism at the TU Dortmund University also offers B.A. programmes in general journalism, economic-policy journalism and music journalism.

develop their skills alongside their studies to become deeply familiar with working routines and tools. Against this background, journalist Marie-Louise Timcke (*Berliner Morgenpost*) together with other students founded the initiative *Journocode* aiming at sharing knowledge about different tools for data journalists among themselves and with a wider audience.

All of the journalism educators interviewed agreed that their institutions should provide a basic introduction to data journalism. Holger Wormer (Technical University of Dortmund) regards data journalistic skills as almost as essential as other journalistic skills: “A journalism education that does not convey the basics of data journalism is in my opinion not up-to-date anymore.” However, he admitted that at his institution only a small number of science journalism students have chosen data journalism as a second subject so far.

While the departments at Hamburg, Dortmund and Cologne are eager to enhance their data journalism offer in the future, Tanjev Schultz (University of Mainz) and Klaus Meier (Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt) cautioned that only a limited number of data journalists will be able to make a living from this specialisation. Wormer, on the other hand, argued that the size of the job market for data journalism graduates depends on how broadly data journalism is defined. If data journalism is just seen as revealing data leaks, such as the Panama Papers, or as creating data graphics, it will stay a niche area. If, however, the analysis of data and user behaviour are also seen as data journalism, the job market automatically becomes much bigger.

In **Portugal**, data journalism as a specific course is only offered on the postgraduate programme at ISCTE-IUL. The course aims to provide basic knowledge ranging from choosing the right sources, treating and analysing data to visualising data, and storytelling with data. Other universities have some courses on visualisation, i.e. the University Autónoma of Lisbon, but they have a broader focus, including print infographics etc. In some universities, although data journalism is not a course in itself, there are workshops or journalistic projects where students develop projects

in this area. Luís António Santos explained that at the University of Minho they do not have data journalism as a course, “but every year the final project that students produce begins with data analysis, so we can say our students have contact with what is data journalism”. There are also some programmes with courses that are targeted at data analysis but related more to traditional social sciences analysis. José Ricardo Carvalheiro (University of Beira Interior) considers that it is an important subject, but it is not yet taught at his university.

Data journalism in the media

In **Romania**, examples for data journalism are scarce as these forms of journalism are at a very early stage. The educators interviewed mentioned Emilia Şercan’s (2017) work on plagiarism, the RISE Project and the Romanian Center for Investigative Journalism as significant examples of data journalism projects. However, the Romanian journalists were of the opinion that data journalism does not really exist in Romania. “What is out there is too mediocre to give as an example”, Cristian Lupşa (*Decât o Revistă*) said. Dan Marinescu (*Adevărul*) explained that it is not possible for journalists in Romania to work with data in a newsroom because of the lack of time and resources.

The journalists interviewed in **Hungary** agreed that data journalism and visualisation are important fields in journalism as they provide much more information and facts about a topic – and that Hungarian newsrooms are lagging behind in this area. Anita Vorák said that only some independent online media regularly use data visualisation, like *444*, *Index*, and *Direkt36*, where she works. In general, newspapers do not undertake data journalism. Attila Babos (*Szabad Pécs*) stressed that, especially in the rural press, the lack of time and resources do not allow journalists to practice data journalism in a professional manner. Zsolt Szijártó (University of Pécs) was of the opinion that the limited access to data hinders journalists to do data journalism.

Attila Bátorfy (*Átlátszó*) considers that the few journalists who practice data journalism in Hungary have a major disadvantage in comparison to their colleagues from Western Europe: they need to be able to do all the work on their own, including programming, data extraction, analysis, interpretation and systematisation as well as data visualisation. Large newspapers in Western Europe, for example *The Guardian*, have been able to set up data journalism units, which split the work. Every journalist gave the same examples of good data journalism in Hungary: the *Direkt36*'s contribution to the Panama Papers and Paradise Papers investigations, and the *Index*'s series of articles about the empire of the oligarch Lőrinc Mészáros and his business partners.

The **German** journalists and journalism educators interviewed agreed that there are many interesting data journalism projects in Germany, and that journalism can be very proud of itself. Generally, two foci have been evolving: interactive and visual data journalism on the one side, practised, for example, by *Berliner Morgenpost*, and investigative data journalism on the other side, practised, for example, by *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *BR Data* and *Correctiv*. Investigative data journalism can either involve the analysis of big data⁷ or documents⁸.

The interviews with the German journalists show that collaborative journalism and data journalism are deeply intertwined in practice. Particularly when there are massive amounts of data involved, like in the Panama Papers investigation, there is a need to

7 E.g. the investigation on how rising sea levels are changing the world by the investigative research network *Correctiv* - together with journalists from seven countries, *Correctiv* analysed more than 700,000 tidal heights worldwide showing that climate change has long been a reality for the coastlines of the world, <https://correctiv.org/en/investigations/climate/article/2017/07/28/sea-rise-overview-world/>. Another example is the data scraping project "Hanna and Ismail" by *Bayerischer Rundfunk* and *Spiegel.de* - journalists from both newsrooms investigated the rumour that people with foreign-sounding names have poorer chances on the German rental market. They created about 15 "personas" with different names and sent 20,000 inquiries to apartments for rent in the biggest German cities. All "personas" spoke perfect German, all had similar professional backgrounds (marketing), and were around 28 years old. After collecting all the answers in a database, they found that there was indeed clear discrimination, especially against men with Arabic or Turkish-sounding surnames. <https://www.hanna-und-ismail.de/>

8 For example, the Panama Papers or the Paradise Papers.

have a big team and to collaborate. As journalist Timcke underlined, “collaboration is incredibly important”.

“The more complex the topics become as in the context of data security, the more important it is that you admit that you do not know everything and work closely with people who have more knowledge.”

Marie-Louise Timcke, Head of interactive team, *Berliner Morgenpost*

Data journalism is seen as an area with potential in **Portugal**, which has not been explored sufficiently yet. The interviewees agreed that most work in this area takes place when linked to collaborative journalism, like in the case of the Panama Papers. Luís António Santos (University of Minho) pointed out that *Rádio Renascença*, *Expresso* and *Público* sometimes integrated data journalism in their work. However, the interviewees agreed that overall there are very few examples in the country.

Raquel Albuquerque mentioned some projects that she has been involved in at *Expresso* that may be considered to be data journalism. She analysed the European alert system for dangerous products and found that 49 alerts were issued within 10 years⁹. *Expresso* also publishes a weekly video on its website produced with information based on data analysis. Her colleague Paulo Pena has also done some work with data journalism, especially in cooperation with the news project Investigate Europe, and the articles were published in several newspapers in Europe and in Portugal.

9 <http://expresso.sapo.pt/dossies/diario/2018-03-12-Em-dez-anos-Europa-alertou-para-49-produtos-portugueses-perigosos#gs.Lm6NXYs>

Collaborative Journalism

Tina Bettels-Schwabbauer, Nadia Leihls (Erich Brost Institute – TU Dortmund University)

Defining collaborative journalism

The Panama Papers investigation, led by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) and German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ), was the largest worldwide collaborative journalism project in history at the time of publication in 2016¹⁰. More than 400 journalists – among them reporters, editors, computer programmers and fact-checkers – from nearly 80 countries (including the countries covered in this study), working in 25 languages, collaborated on the Panama Papers. They exposed offshore companies linked to more than 140 politicians in more than 50 countries. (Hudson 2017; ICIJ.org n.d.)

Collaborations between journalists and news organisations are gaining importance, especially for those concerned with investigative and accountability journalism. Collaboration allows them to join resources and expertise to investigate issues of public relevance for example in the fields of politics, business, trade, and crime – both at a pan-national and a cross-border level (Alfter 2016; Alfter 2018; Sambrook 2018). When there are massive amounts of data involved, there is a particular need for journalists to collaborate and support each other (Sambrook 2018: 94).

¹⁰ <http://panamapapers.sueddeutsche.de/en/> - The Panama Papers investigation was led by Bastian Obermayer (interviewed for this analysis) and Frederik Obermaier from the German newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the ICIJ. Obermayer acquired about 2.6 terabytes of data within a year, making it the biggest leak that journalists had ever worked with.

In recent years, cross-border journalism projects in particular have attracted a lot of attention. This was due to their mutually shared investigations of highly relevant stories in a wide range of different countries despite different languages and journalism cultures, and their simultaneous targeting of regional, national and international audiences (Alfter 2017: 30). The cross-border Panama Papers investigation is an outstanding demonstration of what defines collaborative journalism: sharing and non-competitive thinking (Cohn 2010; Alfter 2016; 2018). In collaborative journalism, fellow journalists and newsrooms do not see each other as competitors, they have joined forces “for the amelioration of their organisations, their products and their audiences” (Stonbely 2017: 17). Also, Howe et al. (2017: 2) see “the beginning of a kind of sea-change, from a news industry that was competitive and siloed to one inclined toward sharing, cooperation, and transparency”. Howe et al. (2017: 3) observe that in innovative media outlets the “traditional newsroom Balkanized production into departments—design, photo, research, city, sports, classes” will be replaced by collaborative environments which will “allow nimble, multifaceted teams to self-organize”.

While there is general agreement that competitive thinking is counterproductive to collaborative journalism, the dimensions of a potential cooperation vary enormously. Stonbely (2017: 14) sees collaborative journalism solely as “a cooperative arrangement (formal or informal) between two or more news and information organisations”. She distinguishes six types of collaborative journalism along the features temporary or on-going, and in terms of the production of content by the collaborating partners in separate, co-creating or integrated working teams (Stonbely 2017: 20-50).

Koch (2018: 64-77) also considers NGOs such as Transparency International as valuable cooperation partners, and Alfter (2018: 42) believes that “any cooperating team of disparate character” can participate in collaborative journalism, such as journalists and scholars. Alfter has thereby widened her definition from 2016, which initially focussed on cross-border journalism. Her view is that collaborative journalism

includes four features: (1) any cooperating team, e.g. journalists from different countries or journalists and scholars, who (2) cooperate on a shared theme or story, (3) compile, mutually crosscheck and ultimately merge their findings to (4) individually fact-check and publish these findings adjusted to their national, local or otherwise specialised target groups. Hultén and Edwardsson (2017: 13) underline the importance of cross-disciplinary teamwork between journalists and engineers. They “need to work more closely together in project-oriented teams” to be able to create new products and services for the media industry.

Most scholars emphasise that collaborative journalism is not to be confused with citizen-, participatory- or networked journalism that seek information from the public (e.g. Stonbely 2017, Sambrook 2018). However, Stonbely (2017: 4) allows “an engagement element” to be part of a collaborative project. For others, like Bradshaw (2013), audience participation is an essential element in collaborative journalism. He considers that collaborative journalism is “a way of pursuing stories that involves people outside of the traditional newsroom”, e.g. crowdsourcing with the help of social networks and online communities.

Collaborative journalism in the participating countries

Different forms of collaborative journalism can be identified in **Romania**. Apart from professional journalists working with professional journalists (peer-to-peer), in the non-profit media business, journalists have collaborated with activists for civil rights, and other NGOs. Collaboration with Internet users is also a source of stories or at least of angles in approaching some topics, usually implemented through specialised platforms for interactions or even through social media.

The pioneers of independent journalism in Romania (sometimes called alternative journalism) have become promoters not only of new formats of reporting

(i.e. data journalism, storytelling), but they have also started to experiment and implement new business models, sometimes in a desperate attempt to secure their work against interferences by media owners, politicians and advertisers. Some freelancers gathered, formed not-for-profit organisations (NfPOs) and made joint, collaborative efforts in drafting and implementing projects. Organisations like the RISE Project, or the Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism, as well as the journalists of the Casa Jurnalistului, the Centre for Media Investigations, and *Recorder* started through collaborative efforts. More recently, Casa Jurnalistului, the Centre for Media Investigations, and *Dela0.ro* have launched a new collaborative project, titled *Să fie lumină* (Let there be light). Some NGOs, e.g. the Fundația pentru o Societate Deschisă (Open Society Foundation) have trained journalists in using public open data and exercising their legal right to access public open data. Collaborative projects were also funded in one of the financing rounds of the Digital News Initiative supported by Google or by other donors such as the US-based Knight Foundation.

Apart from using the information revealed by WikiLeaks, the most relevant collaborative efforts are linked to the Panama Papers, where the RISE project got involved along with 100 other media outlets from across the world. Media professionals are open to collaborations on a large scale, but such efforts are initiated by individual journalists rather than by the profession itself.

There are three types of collaborative journalism in **Hungary**. First, the investigative journalism team *Direkt36* publishes its results on its own portal as well as on one of the biggest Hungarian news portals, *444*, and on the news programme of the largest private television channel, *RTL Klub*. This is an important way of collaborating because *444* and *RTL Klub* do not have enough personnel to carry out their own investigative projects, and the reach of *Direkt36* alone would be much smaller. Second, the Hungarian journalist András Pethő took part in the LuxLeaks project, and *Direkt36*, which was established by András Pethő and his colleagues,

was the Hungarian partner of the Panama Papers (Pethő 2016) and Paradise Papers. A third form of collaboration emerged that of cooperation between journalists and NGOs. For example, Transparency International Hungary leads a mentoring programme for young journalists and the results are published in particular weeklies and news portals.

The need for collaboration means a complete reversal of perceptions and practices for **German** media organisations as well as for individual journalists as previously competition and exclusivity were predominant professional patterns. This perception is slowly changing, with new collaborative-oriented media organisations emerging and established media houses embracing the new trend. Currently, the following types of collaboration can be identified in German journalism: (1) collaboration between single journalists, for example in the ICIJ which coordinated the global investigations on major leaks such as the Panama Papers and the platform *n-ost*; (2) collaboration between different media houses on a national and European level, such as the cooperation between the newspaper *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the broadcasters *NDR* and *WDR* since 2014, and the *etc.network* (Lilienthal 2017: 3), (3) buying-in investigation and presentation expertise from specialised journalist agencies like *Correctiv*, (4) intra-organisational collaboration between journalists, programmers, graphic designers and experts for marketing and sales, (5) collaboration between the media and its audiences (crowd-sourcing, participative journalism).

Portuguese journalists and the media have been involved in reporting of all the major leaks. Two journalists, Rui Araújo, from the TV channel *TVI*, and Micael Pereira from the weekly newspaper *Expresso*, participated in the investigation of the Panama Papers and LuxLeaks. Micael Pereira also worked with WikiLeaks. Paulo Pena, from the daily newspaper *Público*, is part of the Investigate Europe project that aggregates nine journalists from eight European countries.

RESEARCH RESULTS FROM THE CURRICULA ANALYSIS AND THE INTERVIEWS

Collaborative journalism in journalism education

In the **Romanian** media, collaborative journalism is somewhat underdeveloped. Similarly, in the journalism programmes analysed collaborative journalism hardly features. The most widespread form of teaching collaboration is to make groups of students to work together on different projects. Some faculties also use the format of lectures to introduce forms of collaboration in journalism and discuss case studies.

“Especially at our campus newspaper, radio and TV station students work collaboratively to produce content for online radio, video-sharing services or online magazines. Students’ feedback is generally positive. They consider the real-world approach in both the mandatory courses and extracurricular activities to be very useful”.

Elena Abrudan, Babeş-Bolyai University

None of the institutions offer collaborative journalism as a specific course in **Hungary**. Nonetheless, aspects of student collaboration are integrated into other courses in each of the curricula examined. In addition, there are collaborations between departments of the respective universities, for example, there are collaborations with other disciplines – social sciences, humanities and visual arts.

Some departments put special emphasis on teamwork. At the Metropolitan University, the journalism students have to do project work, which means that two or three team members work together for several weeks or months, and their aim is to carry out video reports or other media projects while they reflect on a contemporary problem of public life. Project-based education also plays an important role at the

Pázmány Péter Catholic University where every student has to do a two-semester long project. At the University of Debrecen students work in teams not just during courses, but also on projects that are not connected to the actual curriculum, e.g. producing the faculty's image film. At the Eötvös Loránd University collaboration is also an essential element of the programme, especially in the framework of courses where students produce their own media content (e.g. during the course 'Videographic criticism'). At the University of Szeged, the situation is very similar, but the staff hopes to teach collaborative journalism as an independent field in the near future. Bertalan Pusztai has recently been to Madrid and observed a huge explosion in this field.

All institutions in the **German** sample have integrated aspects of journalistic collaboration into their curricula. The most widespread form is to prepare students to work in teams while doing journalistic research and producing content. This happens in the framework of teaching newsrooms as well as during courses that end with a small journalistic project. Klaus Meier underlined, and most of his colleagues agreed, that:

"Journalists are no longer individual workers – lonely riders – they need to be able to work in teams. There are quite a lot of courses and workshops where we force students to work in teams. And once you are able to work in teams, you will be able to work in international teams afterwards".

Klaus Meier, Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt

Stuttgart, Cologne and Eichstätt specifically aim at enabling their students to work in international, intercultural contexts and include one semester abroad in their curricula. Dortmund requires students to do their internship abroad. At Stuttgart students who cannot afford to study abroad do their 6th semester together with foreign students and in English. In addition, Dortmund enables its students to collaborate in international teams in the framework of single projects or summer schools or

with students from other faculties. In the Bachelor's programmes at Dortmund and Eichstätt, all students have to study a separate minor and by this learn how to work with students from other disciplines.

Some departments use the format of lectures to discuss forms of collaboration in journalism – through case studies students learn how collaborative journalistic projects have emerged, how they were organised and what difficulties might arise. Only Stuttgart offers a module on crowdsourcing to teach students how to collaborate with the audience.

Collaborative journalism is not taught specifically in any of the **Portuguese** universities analysed although students have some preparation for collaboration when they engage in team work for their projects. The Nova University of Lisbon has been part of a collaborative project, called *Repórteres em Construção (REC – Reporters in Construction)*, where journalism students from several universities produce investigative reporting for a website¹¹ and a radio show on *Rádio Renascença*.

Some scholars also mentioned the use of tools like Slack (a collaborative web-based tool) in some of their work.

“About collaborative journalism, we don't ignore it, but it's not the focal point of any course. In general, we try to adapt the curricula, but I think we don't do enough. I.e., we should have a permanent lab for students to develop their skills and we don't”.

Luís António Santos, University of Minho

At the same time the lecturer highlighted that some subjects are so new that sometimes teachers know little more than students. “And the universities should not take the risk to follow the trends. Universities must think, analyse and reflect on recent problems and provide contextual teaching”, he said.

11 <https://www.cenjor.net/rec/>

Collaborative journalism in the media

The interviews with the **Romanian** journalists have shown that there is no consensus about the meaning of the term “collaborative journalism”. Cristian Lușă (*Decât o Revistă*) defined it as journalism made by several media entities together, in different forms (for example, a subject developed by two newsrooms, on radio and in print). However, he stated that these collaborations are not very common in Romania. Dan Marinescu (*Adevărul*) mentioned two newspaper projects – a blog section for contributors from different fields and a collaboration with *Deutsche Welle* for opinions and analyses on international news. Ilie Nicola (*Digi24*) believes that Romanian journalists work mostly individually; in his newsroom they collaborate only with *Deutsche Welle*. For example, they receive video content from the German media outlet and they organise workshops together for digital journalists. For him, collaborative journalism also includes the practice of collaborating with the public, a form of citizen journalism.

Augustin Roman (*Digital Antena Group*) considered the participation of Costin Stucan from *Gazeta Sporturilor* in the Football Leaks as an extraordinary example for collaborative journalism. Over several months in 2016, about 60 journalists from 20 newsrooms in Europe were involved in the evaluation of the data and the research. Razvan Ionescu (*Recorder*) said that collaborative journalism has not yet developed in Romania. The reason for this, he believes, is that Romanians in general are not keen on collaborating because of trust issues. Ionescu thinks that journalism schools should place more emphasis on collaborations in journalism.

Every **Hungarian** journalist in the sample felt that collaborative journalism is becoming very important in a globalized world with investigations being increasingly complex and even crossing national borders. Furthermore, in Hungary, the sources and possibilities of the media are narrowed as more and more media are in the hands of entrepreneurs close to the government and the number of independent critical organs is

decreasing. In these times, collaborations become increasingly important. Independent editors in Hungary mostly like to participate in collaborations: many of them are members of international journalism organisations and keep in touch with each other.

Anita Vorák (*Direkt36*) talked about the obstacles to international cooperation: she found it difficult to find a foreign colleague who was equally interested in a subject, such as an investigation into Lőrinc Mészáros's Croatian interests. Attila Bátorfy (*Átlátszó*) and Gergely Dudás (*Politis*) pointed out that there is no great tradition of cooperation in the Hungarian media, as everyone in Hungary is keen to protect their own territory, so today international collaborations are often more successful than Hungarian collaborations.

Nevertheless, encouraging examples can be found: the investigative journalism centre *Direkt36* is very active; it has participated in Swiss Leaks, LuxLeaks, the Panama Papers and the Paradise Papers, and is a member of international organisations that manage collaborative projects (e.g. ICIJ, OCCRP, GIJN). András Pethő from *Direkt36* is one of the most important players in collaborative journalism in Hungary. Journalist Bátorfy mentioned the investigative report on the company empires of Lőrinc Mészáros by the independent online portal *444* and the independent weekly magazine *Magyar Narancs* as good examples as well as; the co-operation of *Kreatív*, a monthly magazine for the creative, advertising and marketing profession, with *Átlátszó*, Hungary's first investigative journalism non-profit online newspaper. There was also a good collaboration when, during the 2010 elections, the editors of *Index*, *Kreatív*, the business magazine *Figyelő* and the online portal *Origo* shared the work among themselves and analysed the campaign costs of the main political parties in Hungary: each newsroom was commissioned to investigate the campaign costs of one party. However, these are occasional examples and not frequent practice. Dudás mentioned Szabolcs Panyi from *Index* as a good example, who is a member of VSquare, a network of independent media outlets carrying out cross-border investigations in the Visegrad region (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia).

Some **German** interviewees were reluctant to use the term “collaborative journalism” and prefer to use the term “cooperation”. They emphasised the importance of cooperation and that it should be regarded as “normal” work. “Media and journalists who do not cooperate with others will not survive”, journalist and publisher David Schraven (*Correctiv*) stated. In addition, he understands collaboration with the audience as a form of “collaborative journalism”, which is also known as participatory journalism¹². Other interviewees were more cautious about involving audience members in investigations with regard to reliability.

Our results show that there is not only one form of collaborative journalism, but different methods and approaches. Some stories are not only investigated jointly¹³ but also written jointly by the collaborating teams¹⁴; for other projects databases are shared with the partners¹⁵; and for other ventures just the investigation results are shared with the partners¹⁶.

The interviewees thought that the biggest advantage of collaborative projects is that the attention journalists get for their story is multiplied by publishing in several media. This attention span becomes even higher when it is an international

12 As an example, Schraven mentions the project “Unterrichtsausfall” (“cancellation of classes”) for which *Correctiv* gathered data from teachers, pupils and teachers about cancelled classes in schools in the city of Dortmund. With this data *Correctiv* was able to show how many teachers were absent and that the Ministry of Education was giving incorrect numbers to the public.

13 E.g. in the research cooperation of *Süddeutsche Zeitung* and the regional public broadcasters *NDR* and *WDR* https://www.ndr.de/der_ndr/daten_und_fakten/Recherchekooperation-NDR-WDR-und-Sueddeutsche-Zeitung,kooperationen100.html

14 E.g. the story “Hanna and Ismail” on discrimination in the German rental market from *BR* and *Spiegel.de*

15 For the project “Money Island” (<http://web.br.de/madeira/>) the *BR* team created a fully searchable database of all *JORAM* documents and made it available to journalists from *ORF* (Austria), *Le Monde* (France), and *La Vanguardia* (Spain). In *JORAM*, the official Madeira gazette, entries for hundreds of companies in the Madeira low tax regime can be found.

16 E.g. the project “Schnee von morgen” (“snow from tomorrow”) a cooperation from *BR* with regional publishers (<https://schnee-von-morgen.br.de/#stage-1>). The project investigated decreasing snow heights in the German mountains, the media partners got permission to use the investigation results from the *BR* team and published their own story with their regional twist.

collaboration and the stories are published, often simultaneously, in several countries. Furthermore, when several newsrooms collaborate, there are more experts for specific topics available, and the more people work on a leak, the more stories that can be revealed. Big international collaborations also provide safety for individual journalists. According to Bastian Obermayer who led the Panama Papers investigation:

“The mere fact that around 400 colleagues had access to the data made us sleep more peacefully. It made less sense to eliminate one of us, knowing that the other 399 journalists will be really angry and finish the story up anyway”.

Bastian Obermayer, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*

However, collaborations also pose disadvantages. Journalists might have to cooperate with colleagues who work at lower standards, and if there is a leak involved, every additional person who knows about it increases the danger of being put at risk. Furthermore, there are some disadvantages at the operational level. The more people, the more complicated organisational aspects become, and much time is spent in meetings, phone calls, and video conferences. Therefore, journalists should always consider whether the topic is suitable for a collaboration and whether it is really worth engaging in a collaboration: “Just because it’s modern and cool should not be an argument”, Obermayer emphasised.

In **Portugal**, collaboration between media newsrooms is not very common, but there are some examples that were pointed out by the journalists and journalism educators interviewed. Portuguese journalists (and the media they work for) have been involved in collaborative networks, like Investigate Europe and ICIJ. Elisabete Rodrigues referred to the creation of a collaborative project that the newspaper she leads (*Sul Informação*) will take part in: “With the participation of regional newspapers from across the country, the project aims to create an online news network, which shares content nation-wide.” None of the Portuguese interviewees mentioned any examples of collaboration with the audiences.

Innovative Business Models

Ana Pinto-Martinho, Miguel Crespo, Gustavo Cardoso (ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon)

Defining innovative business models of journalism

One of the biggest challenges media businesses are facing is the redefinition of distribution and consumption patterns, shifting from traditional channels such as print, real time radio and TV to online, including digital formats like on-demand videos and podcasts. This digital revolution demands media workers and managers to consider a change from the former one-size-fits-all business model to a panoply of tailor-made models, often only fitting just one product (Bastos – Zamith 2012: 118-119).

The legacy media business model worked well for centuries. Newspapers were financed by copy sales (by piece or by subscription) and advertising; with the advent of commercial radio and TV an advertising-only business model was developed besides public broadcasting models, and also applied to free newspapers and magazines (Bastos – Zamith 2012: 114-115).

In the 1990s, however, “the internet disrupted the revenue stream” (Gorman 2015: 97). The arrival of the Internet as a distribution platform and the growth of online news media have created a new ecosystem with major challenges: mixed results in experimenting with paid content, radically decreasing advertising prices for legacy media, and the increasing competition for advertising revenues online while audience numbers are also decreasing. “The working assumption now seems to be that print advertising revenues will continue to decline, and will probably disappear in the foreseeable future” (Kueng 2017: 18).

“The fundamental problem facing the mainstream news media is that its audience is declining” (Beckett 2008: 20). While the distribution numbers for copy sales are steadily shrinking, the number of successfully implemented paywalls for journalistic content online is still small. Furthermore, advertisers move ever-increasing shares of their budgets away from legacy media to non-media online services such as Google and its subsidiary YouTube, or Facebook.

“We’ve had a transition from print to digital, from digital to mobile, from mobile to social media, and we’ve always lost chunks of the cake, big, big pieces of our advertising cake. (...) Long term there will not be enough money in the markets to finance a big journalism team”.

A representative of the *The Daily Telegraph* (in Kueng 2017: 18)

These developments led the traditional media business model to collapse, forcing legacy media as well as the new online-only media outlets to innovate and develop new ways to get revenue streams (Bastos – Zamith 2012: 132).

New business models that work successfully in the long-term are hard to find. So far, most media outlets have experimented in parallel with different approaches. However, there are some major trends and best-practice examples worldwide that range from different advertising models, paid content, sponsorship and membership, to selling non-media products (Prieto 2015: 164-166).

Paid content models usually make use of different forms of online paywalls (Foà – Cardoso 2016: 367). The freemium approach allows the audience to use part of the journalistic publication for free, but flanked with advertisements, while paying visitors can access additional content often free from advertisements. Users can pay either by subscription or by article. The metered paywall allows all users to access a limited number of journalistic pieces on a media’s webpage, this can be, for example, free access to one piece a day or five pieces altogether. After the

consumption of the free pieces, users are asked to pay for access to further content. “Those newspapers that were to be able to make a success of charging for content were to be those that could focus on a defined community” (Hill 2015: 220). Different payment models allow for general subscriptions as well as fees according to personal interests (e.g. sports or lifestyle) or temporal preferences like access on different devices on workdays and at the weekend. Paid content aggregators, such as Nonio (for the Portuguese media) or Blendle (mainly for the German and Dutch media), allow users to access the content of several media outlets with one single account. Each media outlet earns a percentage of the overall revenue for its own traffic, while the aggregator gets a commission.

A different approach is the utilisation of native advertising, advertorials, and sponsored content, all marked by a strong cooperation between the respective media outlet and advertisers. “Advertising revenues, ideally scaled native advertising revenues, are at the core of their [digital pure media’s] business model” (Kuong 2017: 19). The boundaries between these models are fluid, their aim is to target special audiences and boost the prominence of an advertising brand by exploiting the media outlet’s credibility. Basically, the brand pays for a dedicated area inside a media webpage. This space is used for a mix of editorial content from the media outlet, from the brand, and from guest authors who are specialists on a given subject. The content of advertorials is usually fully managed by the advertising brand. Sponsored content is generally produced by the media outlet and paid for by a brand but is always clearly marked as sponsored content. This model allows the media outlet to fund a larger share of expensive content prior to its production. The involvement of the audience or other sponsors to finance journalistic production is the focus of a different type of business model.

The membership model is an evolution from the subscription model, allowing the audience not to merely subscribe to a media outlet, but rather to become a part of it, to participate in its development and editorial decisions. The extent of individual

influence might depend on the membership status, for example *The Texas Tribune* implemented a membership system with nine different cost and benefit levels, ranging from a one-year membership (\$10, for students) to a chairman's circle membership (\$5,000 annually).

Crowdfunding is usually less focused on subscriptions and more focused on the funding of single journalistic projects. Media outlets aim to create new projects or enhance existing ones through an open call to a large group of people to contribute with small sums of money, usually making use of crowdfunding platforms like Kickstarter or Indiegogo. Although not all projects go beyond this level, there have been very successful crowdfunding initiatives for journalistic projects. In 2012, the campaign for the podcast *99percentinvisible.org* raised 400% over the \$170,000 (ca. €143,000) pledge making it the highest-funded journalism project on Kickstarter at the time (Loker 2012).

Many media outlets worldwide have developed different editorial projects that have been sponsored by donors such as foundations or public institutions. This approach has not only helped media start-ups to secure funding for their first years in total or partially but has also allowed well-established media outlets to experiment with new formats and other innovative modes of digital journalism. One downside of sponsorship and philanthropic funding is that the editorial content might be limited by the sponsors' goals. However, this business model led to the funding of the *The Intercept*, created by journalist Glenn Greenwald, and financed by Ebay founder, Pierre Omidyar.

Last but not least, media outlets have developed revenue streams from non-core businesses, selling products like books, movies, sports and leisure items, electronics and cutlery, and even leasing space. Subscribers can often purchase these products below market value. Another source of income can be the sale of internal know-how by content licencing, custom publishing, event organisation, editorial and communication consulting and training (Foà – Cardoso 2016: 364–368).

Innovative business models in the participating countries

In **Romania**, new business models become more and more prominent in a media landscape that has almost fully succumbed to oligarchic interests (Coman et al. 2018).

“It is not by chance that foreign investors have progressively abandoned the media field in CEE [Central and Eastern European] countries: they have seen their investments generating less and less profits while pressures from politicians and governments have become more intrusive.”

(Zielonka 2015: 19)

In the online media industry, businesses can hardly work within the classical advertising-based model, but use sponsored content or non-profit projects, or both. Small associations of journalists have set up either as not-for-profit-organisations (NfPOs), small companies, or both, to preserve their work without oligarchic interference. For some time, the non-for-profit media business model seemed to be the only viable option for keeping investigative journalism alive.

“The Romanian media market has undergone radical changes since 2008, mainly due to two factors: first, the economic crisis, which pulled advertising money from the media and resulted in dramatic job cuts, owners’ pressures on newsrooms and, eventually, a sense of journalistic despair; and second, the migration of the public from print and TV to online, for entertainment and, eventually, for news.”

(Coman et al. 2018: 208)

A new business model which has become increasingly valuable in the Romanian market is newsrooms set up as NfPOs – meaning as an organisation which does not act primarily to represent the profession or to protect journalists’ rights, but as a

media operation which produces professional reporting, and is financed on a non-profit basis.

These media NfPOs are usually part of international networks: the RISE project belongs to the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP), the Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism is part of the Global Investigative Journalism Network. Their activity is often financed on a project-basis, and they attract their financing mostly from external international donors. These organisations are flexible and innovative in fundraising, and, as part of the materials going viral, they can attract more support through crowdfunding. Although the amounts obtained from their audience are not high, they still illustrate a sign of trust. What is interesting is that once a media NfPO grows, the team of journalists might decide to split the for-profit activity into a media enterprise, which is what happened with *HotNews.ro*, one of the major independent Internet-based outlets, which was initially started as a NfPO, by a group of journalists and IT specialists.

In addition, there are a few highly respected journalists who simultaneously work and collaborate with established media outlets in TV programmes and in newsrooms, and have set up their own companies or, at least, their own web-pages which are or can be monetized at some point (e.g. Moise Guran's *biziday.ro*).

The **Hungarian** advertising market does not only suffer from declining revenues but also from the distorting effect of state influence (Mertek Media Monitor 2017). However, there are no paywalls, metered or freemium contents on the market. The only paywall experiment of the weekly newspaper *Élet és Irodalom* was changed to a unique advertising-based model: users can read all contents for free but must watch a 30-second-long ad that cannot be skipped.

The only form of alternative financing that the Hungarian media use is crowdfunding. The independent investigative teams from *Átlátszó* and *Direkt36* have regular crowdfunding campaigns which are quite successful. Further, the Hungarian tax laws make it possible for tax payers to name a civil organisation that will get one

per cent of their tax. *Átlátszó* is an NGO, so it is entitled to receive this one percent, and it adds up to a very high proportion of its income. Crowdfunding is also used by one of the biggest news portals 444 but not as the main source of income, and by small local portals like *Szabad Pécs* (Free Pécs). How much they earn from crowdfunding is not made publicly available.

Due to technological innovation and the migration of users and content to the Internet **German** media institutions, that is, the print media, have struggled to adapt their monetization strategies. All print media in Germany have experienced a decrease in income from the sale of print products and from advertising. Most of them reacted first by cutting costs, often worsening the work situation of journalists, or closing unprofitable newsrooms or media outlets altogether.

During the last ten years, a trend towards structural changes can be observed as more collaboration has taken place inside the media institutions and within cross-media practices (Sadrozinski 2013: 86). The German media has also experimented with various forms of paid-content models. In 2017, about one third of daily newspapers had set a paywall on their webpages; and the number of paid-for e-papers from magazines has doubled during the last five years (*PV Digest* 2018). Only very few newspapers hide all of their content behind paywalls, the majority still offer their online content free. Most media outlets are experimenting with freemium models (meaning that basic information is still free and only exclusive content, such as in-depth reporting or additional video material, is chargeable) or metered models (meaning that users can read a certain amount of text for free before being asked to pay) (Kansky 2015: 88-91).

Concerning more innovative business models, there are only very few examples of media organisations which have tried to secure their funding by crowdfunding, such as the collective *Krautreporter* (Schächtele 2015), or from foundations or philanthropic funding, such as the daily newspaper *die taz – die tageszeitung* (Bergmann and Novy 2013: 203) or the non-profit investigative newsroom *Correctiv* (Lilienthal 2017).

Media groups in **Portugal** are concerned about the changing nature of media business, and are experimenting with and adopting innovative revenue streams, like native advertising, branded content, metered paywalls, etc. Both legacy media and new media outlets are exploring these and other revenue streams, and some academic research has been undertaken in this area. The only national references are a global report, produced by ISCTE-IUL on behalf of the Portuguese media regulatory body Entidade Reguladora para a Comunicação Social (ERC) in 2015, and a book from the same team published in 2016 about business models and the media (Cardoso et al. 2016).

RESEARCH RESULTS FROM THE CURRICULA ANALYSIS AND THE INTERVIEWS

Innovative business models in journalism education

All the journalism faculties analysed in **Romania** have integrated elements of media economics. The University of Bucharest prepares its journalism students to think about financial constraints, challenges and possibilities. At Master's level, the University of Bucharest also offers a special programme in Media Management. The Alexandru Ioan Cuza University offers a basic economic course named 'Theoretical Introduction to Economics' in the first semester, while other universities offer students the opportunity to learn about and discuss new business models in the framework of other courses dealing with media economics and current developments.

All the **Hungarian** communication and media departments analysed run lectures on media economics, however new business models are not in their focus.

Nevertheless, there are a few courses where some aspects are taught. The Budapest Metropolitan University offers a course on how journalists can build a personal brand. András Murai believes this is very important as nowadays the chance of becoming a full-time journalist has diminished and therefore students have to learn how to move in several directions as freelance journalists. At the Eötvös Loránd University there is a general PR communication course with different lecturers from the different fields of the media industry, where personal branding is also covered. As the analysis shows, at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University, and also at the universities at Debrecen, Pécs and Szeged, marketing knowledge is mainly taught in PR courses. The Eötvös Loránd University offers a 'YouTube stars – online celebrities' course where students learn about the social media stars' business models.

Five of the six **German** programmes being studied include questions about financing journalism in the future in their curricula and offer students the opportunity to learn about and discuss new business models. Most involve media professionals as guest lecturers. Only Hamburg does not offer courses on this topic; the head of department justifies this approach by saying:

“We believe that the difference between newsrooms and publishing companies is reasonable as it provides for journalistic professionalism: journalists should not have to worry about how to finance journalism. Developing business models should be in the hands of media managers”.

Michael Brüggemann, University of Hamburg

Most faculties in this sample discuss economic questions in the framework of rather general courses like 'Introduction to journalism', 'Media economics' or 'Current developments in journalism', while some put a slightly stronger focus on the topic. The programmes at Cologne, Dortmund and Stuttgart offer special courses on business

models, but only the programme at Stuttgart has a strong focus on innovations¹⁷. In cooperation with the media management programme, journalism students at Cologne can attend different courses on business planning and management and they have to develop their own business plan as part of the study requirements. At Dortmund, students can discuss and experience the economic consequences of digitalization as part of special courses such as ‘Editorial analytics’ or ‘Consequences of algorithms’. At Stuttgart, students are required to attend the module ‘Innovation management’ and develop business prototypes for specific cases from the field. Here, media practitioners rate the student’s ideas and at times even implement them in their respective media outlets.

Of the programmes analysed in **Portugal** only two offer specific courses on business models, at ISCTE-IUL ‘Entrepreneurial Journalism and Media Economics and Business’ and at the University Autónoma of Lisbon ‘Media, Economics and Business’. At the other programmes the issue is included in more generic courses. Hence, business models are an area that is seen as important but does not in general have much presence in the programmes. “Business models allow the students to have an idea on how the business works and understand the potential for future use”, said lecturer Santos. Journalist Rodrigues stressed that knowledge of how the media sector and media businesses work is very important, and that this should be part of the journalism and media programmes.

17 The Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt offers a Master’s degree programme in journalism with a focus on innovation and management, the Technical University of Dortmund offers a Master’s degree in journalism with a focus on quality management, and the Stuttgart Media University offers a Master’s degree in media management with a focus on innovation management and entrepreneurship - which have not been part of our analysis.

Innovative business models in the media

For most of the **Romanian** journalists interviewed, innovative business models are those which ensure a profit and the survival of a media institution. Dan Marinescu (*Adevărul*) said that shifting the focus to online content has complicated the matter financially. People in Romania generally do not pay for online content, whether it is high quality or not. Augustin Roman (*Digital Antena Group*) said that most of the new innovative business models in Romania have somehow failed to produce the expected outcome for mainstream media. Journalists agree that nowadays ethical issues are more complicated than ten years ago.

Small innovative **Hungarian** newsrooms are trying to find a business model that ensures their political and economic independence. This is important because in Hungary both the government and the business players take it for granted that they can influence the content of a newspaper in exchange for their financial support. All of the Hungarian journalists interviewed saw that the financing of newspapers is very difficult, that budgets are low, and they can only hire a few journalists, so the energy is often scattered.

Moreover, Hungarian traditions and current conditions do not favour the crowd-funding model: there is low purchasing power, and whoever has the money to subscribe, is often reluctant to pay for journalistic content as Hungarians are not used to paying for digital content and services. *Direkt36* has a single source of income, a three-level donation system consisting of a micro-donation (below 50,000 HUF per year), individual support (above 50,000 HUF) and institutional support. In addition, almost every article of *Direkt36* is published for a fee in other media (*444*, *RTL*, *Forbes*), so they actually contribute to the production of the content. Balázs Weyer (*Editor-in-Chief's Forum*) believes that the advantages of this model are full independence and a much stronger, more direct relationship with the audience. The disadvantage is that it produces a much smaller revenue stream and requires more effort from the journalists,

since the organisation of the crowdfunding campaigns is also part of their job. The NGO *Átlátszó* played a pioneering role in crowdfunding. Attila Bátorfy attaches great importance to that form of financing as it needs less institutional support which may limit the independence of the media outlet. Now approximately 60% of *Átlátszó's* budget comes from crowdfunding, which Bátorfy considers a very good ratio.

Gergely Dudás is currently working on the launch of *Politis.hu*. The online portal focusing on issues of the public life will only be available to subscribers. He said that his model, aiming to offer high quality journalism which is sustainably funded, could be a model for other newspapers.¹⁸ He stressed the fact that *Politis'* model will not allow native advertising, which according to him is one of the most negative phenomena in the Hungarian press. With *Szabad Pécs* Attila Babos tried to establish a community funded medium, but he does not consider it to be a seriously designed business model. Moreover, it has now become apparent that the financing of a rural newspaper is very difficult because of the tough economic conditions and the small Hungarian readership who are reluctant to pay.

More and more **German** news websites have implemented paywalls, but still most of our German interviewees were of the opinion that Germany is an “underdeveloped country” regarding paid content. Journalism professor Tanjev Schultz noted that it is very difficult to convince the audience to pay for journalistic content as digital pay models were introduced too late in Germany. Journalism professor Holger Wormer is of the opinion that media outlets need to experiment more with customised offers based on editorial analytics and algorithms for their paying audience. Furthermore, some journalistic projects, for example, from the fields of data and investigative journalism, should apply for public research grants more frequently.

¹⁸ It is important to highlight that the project was not successful. *Politis* was unable to get enough subscribers, therefore the portal was not able to be launched until the publication of this book.

Some newly-funded German media have been experimenting with crowd-based funding while in search of a sustainable business model, such as *Correctiv*, *Krautreporter* and *Perspective Daily*. *Correctiv*, especially, founded in 2014, has made a name for itself, but founder Schraven emphasised that funding by foundations was never thought to be the only pillar of *Correctiv*'s business model. Instead, from the very beginning it was based on several financial pillars that had been developed over time. In Schraven's view community support is crucial as it is very risky depending on funding by foundations alone, as they can stop long-term funding. Therefore, further streams of income, like community funding in the form of memberships fees or donations, are steadily being developed. From early on, *Correctiv* has produced and sold books which are based on its investigative researches, e.g. *Weisse Wölfe*, a graphic investigation into the Nazi underground. Currently, the business aspect is being developed further as *Correctiv* experiments with selling film rights about its investigations.

None of those interviewed in **Portugal** felt comfortable talking about business models. The interviewed partners agreed, in general, that it is very important for the media to find new business models. The journalism project *Fumaça* (Smoke), that has just won funding from the Open Society Foundation, was mentioned as a good example of independent journalism.

Ethical Challenges

Gábor Polyák, Annamária Torbó, Éva Varga (University of Pécs)

Defining ethical challenges of journalism

The technological developments since the end of the 20th century have not only impacted on journalistic practices, but “[t]he global, digital age effects journalism ethics.” (Wyatt 2014: xviii). As de Haan et al. (2014: 207) note, “[t]he entry of digital technology acts as one of the most significant factors changing the ethical practice of journalism today”, as one example they name the journalists’ dilemma of often having to decide between speed or verification and accuracy. The increase of journalistic investigations and publications online poses many other new challenges – besides the rather classical questions such as impartiality, conflict of interest, deception and betrayal (Muller 2014). At the forefront is an ever-increasing amount of fake news that urges extensive fact checking, and dealing with hate speech in comments sections. Other ethical issues include questions arising from linking content from other sources, including content from citizen journalism and whistle blowers, handling large amounts of data as well as the products of digital visualisation (photo, video, and graphics), plagiarism, and problems of privacy in the digital age. (McBride – Rosenstiel 2014; Foreman 2016; Muller 2014; Zion – Craig 2016).

Against this background of pressing ethical issues for today’s journalists, instruments of media accountability become even more important. McQuail describes media accountability as a process of co-orientation.

“[A]ccountable communication exists where authors (originators, sources, or gatekeepers) take responsibility for the quality and consequences of their publication, orient themselves to audiences and others affected, and respond to their expectations and those of the wider society.”

(McQuail 2003: 19)

Bardoel and d’Haenens (2004) have specified the different stakeholders potentially to be addressed in the accountability process: besides the public, they mention the journalistic profession and the market, as well as the political sphere – which facilitates a debate about the role of media accountability beyond Western democracies. However, media accountability instruments need to be understood as “any non-State means of making media responsible towards the public” (Bertrand 2000: 107). This encompasses the implementation of self-control bodies, such as press councils, the inclusion of actors outside the profession, such as users, NGOs and scholars into the debate about journalistic ethics, and the efforts of newsrooms to be transparent about their editorial processes and practices such as employing news ombudspople.

Systematic research on discourses about media ethics studies started in the 1970s, and excellent overviews are provided by Brown (1974) and Marzolf (1991). Several widely-discussed journalism scandals in Western countries (e.g. “Jimmygate” in the US, and the “Hitler diaries” in Germany, for an overview see Fengler 2003) resulted in an increasing theoretical and normative academic debate, but only very few small-scale empirical studies on single instruments (mostly press councils, ethics codes, ombudsmen, and media journalism) existed until recently (for an extensive literature overview see Fengler et al. 2013).

Comparative research on the work conditions of European journalists and on the impact of media accountability instruments on their work is growing (Bertrand 2000; Nordenstreng 1999; Fengler et al. 2013; High Level Group on Media Freedom and Pluralism 2013), but the authors come to rather sceptical conclusions regarding the

impact of many of these instruments. Studies have shown that even journalists who cover media issues for quality media shy away from criticising their colleagues and supervisors. The MediaAcT study (2013) concludes that Central and Eastern as well as Southern European journalists are more sceptical about the aim of improving ethical standards by transparency; while the majority of journalists from Northern and Western European countries were convinced (at least in theory) that being transparent about journalistic procedures, as well as publishing corrections and apologies, leads to more trust. The majority of journalists from Spain, Italy, Romania and Poland believed that publishing corrections or making newsroom processes transparent online will damage the bond of trust between journalists and the audience. Similarly, journalists from countries with a developed profession – characterised by established journalists’ unions or federations, and a tradition of journalism education, as well as developed infrastructures of media self-regulation – place considerably more emphasis on professional codes, while journalists in Southern and Central and Eastern Europe put more emphasis on company codes. Here, the newsroom is, or has the potential to be, the place to reinforce the rules of journalism.

Given the obvious insufficiency of traditional instruments of media self-regulation – which mainly result from the collective or individual self-interest of media professionals – engaging the audience and other actors external to the profession might be a promising option to strengthen media accountability (see Fengler 2012). With the advent of social media channels, like Facebook and Twitter, journalists are faced with an increasing amount of feedback and criticism from their audiences. Younger journalists and those journalists who work for online media, are particularly open-minded about these innovative instruments and take into account the notable increase of critical audience feedback online (MediaAcT 2013).

Journalists have long been “society’s autonomous manufacturers of knowledge” and by this one of the pillars of democratic decision-making, but “modern newswriters no longer serve as an absolute gatekeeper” (de Haan et al. 2014: 207). Furthermore,

the lines between professional journalists and citizen journalists or digital activists, who can address broad audiences, are blurred. The latter are not usually familiar with the ethical norms professional journalists are obliged to comply with and are not involved in the workflow and control mechanisms of newsrooms. At times, journalists themselves mix their roles when being active as bloggers and Facebook users. The question of making a distinction between professional journalists and other creators of online content is not only a theoretical problem but causes problems for both journalists and audiences (Simon 2015).

The handling of large amounts of data by journalists throws up a panoply of ethical questions: often information can be received without knowing the identity of the sender which poses problems when checking the reliability of the data. The influence of WikiLeaks on journalism might be seen as an example (Muller 2014). Dealing with sources and data in a digital environment also questions the ability of journalists to technically and legally protect their sources.

Journalists and audiences alike are faced with an unprecedented amount of fake news and with misinformation campaigns, notably on social media. Therefore, journalists need to set up rules on how to use information from social media sources. Furthermore, journalists often find themselves as the target of vicious attacks, being called liars and the source of fake news themselves, in an attempt to undermine the credibility of the whole profession. In the current post-truth era, it is crucial for journalists to work transparently and professionally, based on a clear ethical framework, in order to counterbalance the spreading of disinformation, and to distinguish journalism from other forms of public communication (High level Expert Group on Fake News and Online Disinformation 2018; Russ-Mohl 2017; McBride – Rosenstiel 2014).

A related topic is the treatment of harmful comments in the comments sections of the media. Comments from the audience can be a valuable source of feedback and discussion, but offending contributions can damage both the participants in the

discussion and the reputation of the media outlet (Muller 2014). Media outlets have to take on the responsibility of dealing with feedback from their audiences in better and more creative ways.

Furthermore, journalists today are more than ever pressed to be the first to publish. This is not only problematic when it comes to fact checking but has led to the practice of some journalists regularly taking articles from other media outlets and publishing them under their own name. Plagiarism is not only a legal problem, but also a problem for pluralism of the press as the diversity of voiced opinions shrinks when news is only copied, but not investigated.

Ethical challenges in the participating countries

Several ethical challenges related to the development of digitalization, the Internet and social networks have to be mentioned for the **Romanian** market. They are seldom discussed in the media or in the professional community and little research has been done on the subject. Currently, the most pressing issues for the Romanian media are the influence of the social network Facebook on the public's access to news, and poor journalistic professionalism. The rise of social media has increased competition for attention and for advertising money. While there is an abundance of research on politicians and social media and on cyber-activism, little has been done so far on Facebook-based journalism. This phenomenon has led to Facebook-made politics and Facebook activism, to directly reach audiences and to be covered by mass media.

Plagiarism and poor newsgathering procedures might be named as two examples of the lack of journalistic standards in some Romanian media. Plagiarism exists mostly in the form of copy-paste journalism, with journalists copying out press releases, press agencies materials, and content from social media or from other journalists. The reaction to this practice in the profession is almost inexistent (see Lazăr – Radu 2012),

and discussions around plagiarism cases related to key political figures indicate that journalists and analysts even have difficulty in understanding plagiarism in its many forms. On the other hand, the abundance of advice in the media on naturalist, traditional treatments and wonder cures for serious medical conditions (see, for example, Tivadar 2017; Radu 2017) illustrate most vividly that journalists do not make sufficient use of basic newsgathering techniques and do not refer to authoritative sources.

In the **Hungarian** media landscape, ethical problems, such as fake news and hate speech, have a special framework: political communication from the government is sometimes based on elements that show some similarity to phenomena like fake news and hate speech. The only fact-checking website is operated by the think tank of the governing party (*factcheck.hu*). In these circumstances, media accountability instruments that are well established in Western Europe are not applicable, as ethical and professional criticism easily turn into political statements. This leads to a rather problematic self-conception of journalists. Because of the high degree of political parallelism, journalists are often acting as political activists. Furthermore, the self-regulatory bodies have no real power to force ethical rules into practice and to stimulate the professional discussion. In 2018, the online journal *Mediapiac.com* launched a debate on journalism ethics focusing on the question of whether journalism ethics can hinder the disclosure of stories of social importance, with special regard to the Hungarian media situation. So, ethical debates in Hungary are still dealing with classical ethical issues.

The debate about the rise of hate speech and fake news in **Germany** involves not only scholars and media professionals but occupies the wider public. Several media outlets and NGOs have reacted to the problem by setting up fact checking teams (Butzke 2017). Discourse on other ethical issues, which are still relevant for journalism, such as quality in journalism, source protection and privacy is often limited to scholarly and media professional circles, and is of a high quality and sophisticated (see, for example, Heesen 2016). In contrast, more current topics like Internet security, information

justice, data freedom, transparency and surveillance are not limited to the journalistic field, but reach a wider audience through the media attention on conferences such as the re:publica and the activities of the Chaos Computer Club (CCC), and lively online debate (see, for example, Kappes et al. 2017).

The main ethical challenges for journalists and journalism in **Portugal** nowadays are fake news and the way to deal with them, problems with social media (the lack of revenue streams), the decrease of the power of journalism (and journalists), data journalism (privacy and surveillance issues), the use of algorithms (conditioning the access to news), artificial intelligence (autonomous news production), and independence (from media groups, new media companies – related to low income and unsecured employment). These ethical worries have resulted in a review of the journalists' ethical code, led by the Portuguese journalists' union.

RESEARCH RESULTS FROM THE CURRICULA ANALYSIS AND THE INTERVIEWS

Media ethics in journalism education

Every **Romanian** institution analysed offers courses in media ethics. All programmes discuss journalistic ethics and the new challenges that have arrived with digitalization during courses that teach media ethics in general. Examples of courses are 'Public communication ethics' (University of Bucharest), 'Ethics and professional deontology' (Babeş-Bolyai University), and 'Ethics and deontology in journalism' (Spiru Haret University). The journalism programme at the Lucian Blaga University offers a course in ethics and media criticism, but as our interviewee stated, they face a major problem because, apparently, in the local media things are different:

“Students told us that when they were hired, people in the media advised them to forget all the rubbish that they learned in school, to forget ethics. They have to do what needs to be done. So they are torn apart between what they learned to do in school and what the boss asks them to do, regardless of ethical concerns.”

Gabriel Hasmařuchi, Lucian Blaga University

In all of the **Hungarian** universities, there have been general media law and media ethics courses integrated into the curricula for a long time, and most of them have been converted to the new challenges related to digitization. Zsolt Szijártó (University of Pécs) noted that with the penetration of social media a large number of questions arise that one has never thought of before. ‘The ethical and legal questions of the regulation of communication’ are taught together in one course, and there is an independent course for ‘Media regulation’. The department often organises workshops and there is a media festival related to these topics. Similarly, at the University of Debrecen and at the Pázmány Péter Catholic University media law and media ethics are taught together. Ákos Kovács (Pázmány Péter Catholic University) considers that for a catholic university it is essential to take responsibility for someone’s actions, and this is also the case in the media field.

At the University of Szeged and at the Eötvös Loránd University students can attend not only courses on media law and media ethics but also specific courses for journalists. Students at Szeged who have chosen the specialisation in print have to do the course ‘Legal background of journalism, legal and ethics question in practice’. At the Eötvös Loránd University the changes in Internet content related to judgement practice are an emphasised topic during the course ‘Communication case studies: the freedom of expression in the light of judicial practice’. Another interesting initiative is a seminar on press freedom, where students analyse the situation of the media in Hungary.

Most of the time in **Germany**, questions about ethical challenges are embedded in other parts of the curricula. As the journalism educators reported, discussions around journalistic ethics frequently arise during news production in workshops and teaching newsrooms.

Apart from Stuttgart, all other departments discuss journalistic ethics and challenges that have arisen with digitalization during courses that focus on media ethics in general or on single aspects. Current issues discussed in the framework of courses and lectures are the effects of digitalization on journalistic production, as for example, the responsible use of material from social networks during acts of terror or shootings, or tools for fake checking. Other courses revolve around issues such as how to cover conflict or right-wing movements.

Marlis Prinzing (Macromedia University) and Klaus Meier (Catholic University Eichstätt-Ingolstadt) underlined the need to expand their students' knowledge concerning journalistic ethics; while at the Macromedia University the course 'Media and business ethics' is already compulsory, at Eichstätt the ethics course will be mandatory in the near future. Prinzing emphasised that while ethics is a key competence in journalism, it must be reflected everywhere, especially in the media professions, hence also in PR, advertising and media management.

All of the programmes analysed in **Portugal** run courses in this area, some are more focused on law (i.e. Law, Deontology and Communication Ethics, Law and Communication Deontology), others on ethics (Ethics and Professional Deontology, Ethics and Communication Deontology), and others on deontology (Critical Studies and Media Deontology). Both lecturers and journalists acknowledged the importance of ethics in today's journalism.

"I think the ethical challenges of today's journalists are different from those ten years ago; due to digital journalism, social networks and the quantity of information it has become an even more important topic."

Raquel Albuquerque, *Expresso*

For António Granado (Nova University of Lisbon) one of the main problems regarding the teaching of ethics is that "the graduates don't apply their acquired knowledge in their job as a journalist. What they learn about ethics has no practical use".

Ethical challenges in the media

Most interviewees identified fake news and political interferences as the main ethical challenges in **Romania**. The trend towards participation in (political) communication on the Internet and on social media has particularly led to the emergence of entities, which misinform and provide fake news. The interviewees agreed that extensive fact checking has become one of the most important tasks for journalists. Other problems they mentioned are the rush for clicks which often produces questionable content, click baiting through false or sensational titles, and the high number of paid and unmarked content of celebrities and influencers.

Elena Abrudan (Babeş-Bolyai University) pointed to the important role which media education already plays in secondary education and mentioned the efforts of the Center for Independent Journalism and its partners in providing media and information literacy in schools. She also called attention to the reports on hate speech in the media (both traditional and online) by non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as PATRIR and ActiveWatch and private initiatives aimed at the automated detection of untrustworthy news, such as Zetta Cloud TrustServista.

All journalists in the sample consider ethics as a very uncertain area in **Hungarian** journalism. Although there are uniform rules and laws, and most independent newsrooms have their own code of ethics, there are many loopholes and uncontrolled areas. The following issues were named as the most difficult in Hungarian journalism: copying content from other media, the lack of independent sources, the publication of unmarked adverts and less and less fact checking. Obviously, also the fact that issues of media laws and ethics have been neglected in journalism education adds to the problem.

Gergely Dudás considered that it is also a big problem that the boundary between news and opinion has been completely blurred, even in quality media like the liberal magazine *HVG*, *Index*, and *444*. The situation is only exacerbated by the fact that

sometimes the title of an article creates a misleading context. This is particularly noticeable in texts published in social networks.

Attila Bátorfy stated that the establishment of a complete, comprehensive ethical code is rather the exception at Hungarian newspapers. As the Hungarian media market is small, news competition often overwrites all other aspects. Bátorfy thinks that one of the biggest problems is ethical misconduct in collaborations and embargoed news as every medium wants to be the first publishing the news. He also mentioned the proximity between media houses and politicians as a problem. In his view, another dilemma is that newspapers publish corrections in an only barely noticeable form.

Dudás also found it problematic that journalists in Hungary do not accept the work of accountability mechanisms, like press councils, and consider it a waste of time to deal with complaints about unethical practices. Therefore, enforcing ethical norms in everyday life often lags behind or goes awry. Time shortages and lack of staff are the cause of many professional mistakes.

Furthermore, Internet journalism and the community media have raised many new issues in the field of ethics, but the journalists interviewed here felt that these issues are almost completely unclear and still awaiting discussion. Vorák emphasised that how to handle anonymous sources is a very important ethical issue, because today Hungarians only tend to release information to journalists anonymously.

While most **German** interviewees agreed that today's media ethics are strongly shaped by the digital transformation, they also emphasised that challenges attributed to the advent of digitalization, such as fake news, hate speech and whistleblowing, are old phenomena as people spread rumours before the Internet was invented. Rather, journalism professor Lars Rinsdorf is of the opinion that fake news and the spread of misinformation are political challenges. Journalists can defeat them by applying well-known journalistic tools. However, Rinsdorf sees the need to discuss the consequences of automated news production in the near future as this approach will not stay limited to sports news, but might be applied to other areas of journalism, such as political analysis.

Since 2017, *Correctiv* has partnered with Facebook to fact-check material shared on the social network. “The old faith that truth will win did not work anymore as Facebook frames an echo chamber in which lies thrive – and we wanted to change that”, Schraven stated. At the beginning *Correctiv* did not accept money from Facebook for its work on the platform, while now *Correctiv* is paid for its work there by Facebook.

Ever since Edward Snowden leaked classified information from the National Security Agency (NSA) in 2013, whistleblowing has become an important issue for journalists. The Panama Papers were also released by a whistleblower. However, whistleblowers – insiders who expose corrupt or illegal activities – are nothing new and have always been an ethical challenge for journalists, the German interviewees agreed, as “it is not so different from handing over a file folder in earlier times” as journalism professor Rinsdorf said. The interviewees thought that back then and today the same journalistic methods apply: to cross-check whether what the source is saying is true and to protect it. The only key change is that today the communication between the journalist and the whistleblower is digitally encrypted.

The biggest ethical challenges mentioned in **Portugal** were the overwhelming quantity of information and the increasing difficulty in dealing with journalistic sources, such as users of social media and whistle-blowers. The frenetic pace of the newsrooms nowadays is also seen as a problem that can bring ethical challenges. Journalists must be faster than their competitors, produce more news stories, and in many cases, they do not produce their own content but just copy and replicate content from news agencies, said António Granado (Nova University of Lisbon). Social media also bring challenges, such as clickbait, when headlines are designed to make readers want to click on a hyperlink which then leads to content of dubious value. Fake news and how to handle this is also seen as a challenge by journalists and scholars, and they agreed that more extensive fact checking practices are needed.

Lessons learned - Insights gained

All interviewees agreed that the on-going digitalisation of communication has been posing challenges to journalism on many levels, ranging from the need to create new streams of income to coping with the frenetic pace of an often overwhelming stream of information. One common theme presented by journalism educators was that there is no need to follow every trend, e.g. that journalism education should not try to include and embrace every new development in the industry, but teach core competences and only those trends that are significant. The role of journalism educators rather should be that of critics who observe developments in the media and implement new skills and tools in their teaching only if relevant.

Almost all the journalism education institutions acknowledge the importance of teaching ethics in the digital age and of conveying knowledge about new business models. However, while most of the institutions teach general media economics and discuss current developments with their students, a minority focuses on the need to learn how to develop business plans and strategies for journalistic projects. The same is the case for the field of journalism ethics, which is taught by most of the sample, often in the form of lectures on media laws and media ethics. In some programmes, students discuss media ethics during journalistic projects or while working in teaching newsrooms. Courses that focus on single problematic aspects of the digital public sphere such as handling hate speech and the viral spread of fake news are exceptions.

None of the educational institutions we analysed teaches courses on collaborative journalism, but most put emphasise on teaching their students how to work in teams. Some discuss best-practice examples of collaborative journalism during lectures.

The journalism educators we interviewed often pointed out that it is quite difficult for universities to offer specific courses on the different topics as their institutions are often constrained by a lack of resources. This is especially true for the field of

data journalism, which is taught as a special course by most German and Romanian institutions we analysed, but only by a few in Hungary and Portugal. Clearly, financial constraints make it hard to teach courses, for which modern technical equipment needs to be bought and practicing data journalists need to be hired as lecturers. Hiring external expertise is necessary because most journalism educators do not have practical experience in data journalism and therefore cannot teach it adequately.

Besides financial constraints, one reason why Hungary lags behind in all four of our fields, is that there are no independent journalism programmes at higher education institutions. Journalism education is integrated into media and communication programmes which must include other content as well. The need to acknowledge journalism as an independent discipline (see also Weyer et al. 2015) is great, and only then would it be possible to teach journalism adequately and to provide future journalists with the professional skills their careers require.

Another reason for the differences in implementing innovation in journalism education could be the status quo of the media in the respective countries, which again becomes especially clear when looking at data journalism. While, for example, promising developments in the media as well as in journalism education can be observed in Germany, newsrooms and universities in Romania and Hungary are not only struggling with a lack of time and resources, but also with economic and political constraints. However, there are bright spots as many new collaborative journalism networks have evolved in the two countries during the past few years, which have set up new business models to finance their often investigative and data-driven journalistic projects. This is especially the case in Hungary, where small innovative newsrooms need a business model that ensures their political and economic independence. Other obstacles facing innovators in journalism and journalism education is the resistance to innovation by colleagues or supervisors who do not see the need for any transformation.

Based on the results of our study and the work of other media scholars and professionals we believe that knowledge of data journalism, collaborative journalism, innovative business models, and journalism ethics will be important for future journalists. Mastering any of these fields includes the need to observe trends critically, to decide what skills are essential to secure journalistic standards and press freedom and what tools might be helpful for journalism to evolve further.

Part 2:

Journalism Under New Social Conditions

Introduction

The pace of digital disruption forces media outlets throughout Europe to become more flexible and adaptable than ever before with regard to business models, content, and the means of distribution of that content. Consequently, journalists constantly need to acquire new skills and thus require further education. Every few years new social networks attract new users, innovative technologies require attention, especially while there is still uncertainty about whether they will ever become mainstream. Pioneer journalists “establish new organisational figurations” (Hepp – Loosen 2021: 591) of journalism beyond the classical news organisation, transforming perceptions of journalism and the journalistic workspace. Such innovations also require journalists to work in a more interdisciplinary manner, closely cooperating with software developers, data specialists, and business developers, which further transform the journalistic professionalism and the skills journalists need to fulfil expectations from both employers and the audience. This has contributed to the evolution of “hybrid” roles and types of journalism (Splendore – Brambilla 2021).

These developments pose a challenge for journalism educators at universities, journalism schools or institutions of further education. Adapting curricula at such a rapid pace is challenging and requires constant exchange with practitioners. At the same time, journalism schools should refrain from following every trend, and focus on the core competencies of the journalistic crafts (see Part 1 of this book). However, it is crucial to acknowledge that the “market” for young professionals in journalism is in constant transformation, and journalism educators need to consider this, in order to find a robust balance between tradition and disruption.

In this part of the book, we focus on the nine fields of the “NEWSREEL2 – New Teaching Fields for the Next Generation of Journalists” project. The fields are: (1) storytelling in social media, (2) graphic journalism, (3) improving democratic sensibility,

(4) foreign coverage, (5) covering migration, (6) AI and journalism, robot journalism and algorithms, (7) journalism for voice-activated assistants and devices, (8) verifying and analysing fake news, and (9) debunking disinformation. Some of these fields have only recently emerged following technological change, such as storytelling in social media and journalism for voice-activated assistants and devices. Others are more deeply rooted in journalism education – such as foreign coverage or the responsibility of journalists in a democracy through improving democratic sensibility, but these fields are arguably in need of a thorough update given the current challenges. These are multiple, such as the global rise of populism (e.g. Moffitt 2016) and its impact on a free media landscape, the developments and role of digital platforms in today’s public sphere (e. g. De Blasio et al. 2020), and calls for a more cross-cultural and cross-border collaborative stance on international reporting (e.g. Grzeszyk 2019).

Our project consortium consists of media and journalism scholars from the University of Pécs (Hungary), the Masaryk University (Brno, Czech Republic), the Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism, an affiliate institute of TU Dortmund University (Germany), the ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon (Portugal) and the University of Bucharest (Romania). NEWSREEL2 has a solitary “journalism practice” partner- Hostwriter, an international network based in Berlin that helps journalists to easily collaborate across borders. In part 2 of the book, each of the nine fields is introduced in a chapter consisting of (1) a review of the relevant literature and industry information and (2) the results of interviews conducted with journalists in the five project countries.¹⁹

The interviews were based on a semi-structured interview guide consisting of both field-specific questions and a set of education-related questions, which were the same across all fields. We interviewed 41 journalists between March and June 2021, either

19 In a few cases, it was not possible to interview journalists in all five countries. Subsequently, some of the chapters only contain interviews from four countries.

via video calls or in written form through email-based questionnaires.²⁰ We conducted most of the interviews in English. However, in some cases where both interviewer and interviewee had the same mother tongue, these were conducted in the respective language and subsequently translated. Rather than drawing a representative picture of the fields and how they are anchored in the respective countries, the interviews serve as an illustration of relevant challenges and trends in the studied fields of reporting and their implications for the journalistic job market. We also assessed the expectations of our interviewees towards journalism education and gathered their ideas on how to better implement relevant skills in teaching.

²⁰ In total, three of our interviewees were interviewed not only for one, but for two of the fields covered, as they hold expertise across fields. For a full overview, see the list of interviewees annexed to the book.

Storytelling in Social Media

Rita Glózer (University of Pécs)

Changing boundaries of journalism

The digitalization and increasing convergence (Jenkins 2006) of the media environment has led to a profound transformation of the journalistic practice. Research shows that key elements of the high-impact paradigm shift are the ongoing modification of journalistic work, rearrangement of the relationships between journalists, their readers, and their sources (Burgess – Hurcombe 2019; Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019; Nah – Chung 2020) as well as transformation of the media organisations, the business practices and models. Media content and storytelling have faced fundamental challenges (Pavlik – Bridges 2013; Boesman – Costera Meijer 2018). Approaches from across disciplinary backgrounds emphasise various components of this transition, but each underlines the current blurring of boundaries of journalism. In this context, researchers interpret changes in journalism as *boundary work* or even a *boundary struggle* (Carlson – Lewis 2015; Boesman – Costera Meijer 2018). The transformation mentioned has affected the external and internal boundaries of journalism as a profession and a practice: the ideologies and politics of journalism, the professional roles and norms, the ways of constructing news narratives, and – among others – the traditional hierarchy of journalistic genres (Carlson – Lewis 2015). Further changes have occurred in newsroom structures such as the emergence of not only new job profiles (such as community manager or comment moderator), but also new types of legal and ethical issues.

One of the most significant fields, in which this boundary work occurs is the increasing participation of the journalistic audience. The notion of *participatory*

journalism refers to various forms of reader input at all stages of news production (Singer et al. 2011). Current forms of audience contribution, such as citizen media, citizen blogs, citizen stories, collective interviews, comments, content hierarchy, forums, journalist blogs, polls and social networking have become increasingly integrated into news production processes of online newspapers and websites in recent years (Singer et al. 2011: 17). Scholars interpret this as a consequence of journalists' effort "to accommodate input from the audience within the spaces that media institutions once tightly controlled" (Singer et al. 2011: 18), although this process is quite controversial (Jurrat 2011; Carlson – Lewis 2015; Salaverría 2019).

Typical contributions of 21st century accidental, amateur journalists are smartphone videos and photographs shared via social networking sites and even social media posts. Recent literature often uses the concept of citizen journalism as a synonym for participatory journalism, social media journalism, grassroots and amateur journalism, open-source journalism, hyperlocal journalism, distributed or networked journalism, and "produsage" (Bruns 2008). All of these are closely related to the notions of user-generated content and user-created content.

Experience shows that many citizen journalists do not consider themselves journalists, but rather activists, and therefore do not feel bound by the rules of journalistic ethics. Since media offer both professional and amateur contents – such as most social media –, readers may not always easily distinguish between amateur and often unverified content on the one hand and professional content on the other hand, which media organisations have checked for accuracy, objectivity, truthfulness, and fairness. All these transformations occurred in the midst of a severe economic crisis affecting the news industry, closely related to changes in news consumption patterns (Singer et al. 2011). Under these circumstances, research found new economic motives behind the practices of (allowing) participatory journalism: strategies of building loyalty to the news brand, boosting website traffic or competing effectively in general (Singer et al. 2011; Carlson – Lewis 2015).

The emergence of social media (the increase of political and news blogging first) (Bruns 2008) led to the rise in optimistic expectations for the democratization of journalism. Ordinary people's widespread participation in media content production (Jenkins 2006; Burgess – Green 2009) has promised both to reduce the barriers to news production as well as to break down the divisions between professional journalists and citizens. Burgess – Hurcombe (2019: 360) envision future journalism as a participatory practice, the internal logic of which brings journalistic work and everyday oral practices of news sharing (gossip, conversation, letter writing) together. Towards the close of the 2010s, a small number of proprietary digital platforms have a near-global dominance of, and influence over, the circumstances of journalism, which the concepts of the “platform society” (van Dijck et al. 2018) and the “platform paradigm” (Burgess 2015) in academic discourse reflect.

Digital journalism

The concept of digital journalism refers to new genres and modes of journalistic storytelling by exploiting the interactive multimedia affordances of digital media technologies (Burgess – Hurcombe 2019: 361). The concept's tools and techniques – data driven digital storytelling, data visualization, digital video, and new digital ways of newsgathering, interviewing and documenting – have been used since the early 2010s (Burgess – Hurcombe 2019: 361). Burgess and Hurcombe point out that digital journalism connects with new ways of distributing news and reaching audiences taking advantage of the interactive and conversational affordances of social media platforms. These offer attractive opportunities for journalists to share and promote their work and to have a direct discussion with their audience as well as to develop their personal professional brand.

Social news, a sub-genre of digital journalism, has the core features of vernacular conventions and pop-cultural sensibilities (use of memes, GIFs or acronyms), as well as

platform-based social justice politics (support of and identification of with politically progressive causes). Social news illustrates the mutually constitutive relationship between the new form of journalism and the logics of social media (Burgess – Hurcombe 2019: 363). At the same time, digital journalism has the opportunities to investigate and criticize the platform practices used to curate and moderate news content and user discussions around it (or cases of misinformation, deep-fake and so on).

Social media journalism

According to the Reuters Institute *Digital News Report 2020*, access to news continues to become more distributed:

“Across all countries, just over a quarter (28%) prefer to start their news journeys with a website or app. Those aged 18–24 (so-called Generation Z) have an even weaker connection with websites and apps and are more than twice as likely to prefer to access news via social media. Across age groups, use of Instagram for news has doubled since 2018 and looks likely to overtake Twitter over the next year.”

(Newman et al. 2020: 11)

While social media is becoming increasingly integrated into media routines, news consumption is also increasingly taking place on social media. In the “contemporary flow of media content, news can be found ‘via third-party platforms but accessed on publishers own sites’ (distributed discovery) or ‘both found and accessed on third-party platforms’ [sites] (distributed content)” (Sehl et al. 2018 cited by Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 2). Mobile, networked, and portable media platforms such as smartphones and internet-linked tablets offer a number of innovative communication capabilities. Following the standardization of mobile news consumption as well as the

trends in social media use, media outlets made efforts to adapt these news distribution routines, and also experiment with native formats adjusted both to the changing news consumption behaviour and to new functionalities of the social networking sites (Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 2).

Becoming increasingly important for online news distribution, social media platforms provide a popular point of access to news, especially for young users who get the news on their mobile devices as part of their permanent social media presence. The centrality of social media in the news consumption habits modified ways, in which users are exposed to and engaged with information as they can find the news on social media sites even when they are not actively seeking it. Nonetheless, accidental exposure makes users feel that they are well-informed. This type of interaction between audiences and news content tends to be ephemeral in the sense that “users spend less time watching these stories and their attention is brief, partial, and fragmented” (Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 2). Consequently, the media make efforts to produce native formats such as journalistic microformats, “prioritizing the use of ‘horizontal storytelling mode’ and Snapchat’s ‘tap to advance mode’, Twitter moments, Facebook and WhatsApp status, as well as Instagram Stories” (Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 2).

New ways of storytelling in digital journalism

In the context of journalistic work, the term *storytelling* has become multifaceted being used to name both a specific journalistic genre (such as narrative or transmedia journalism) as well as a journalistic practice (Boesman – Costera Meijer 2018). In the latter sense, it is often seen as the opposite of, or at least something different from, truth-seeking. According to the results of a study among newspaper journalists, “news makers and storytellers – experienced as roles, identities or positions – differ in their preparation and presentation practices when making news stories” (Boesman

– Costera 2018: 18), while both strategies are seen as responses to the emergence of online news.

Whereas in print journalism, text-linguistic narrative techniques facilitate the immersive reading experience, journalistic multimedia stories are also able to immerse the audience in distant news events by combining text, image, video, audio, and graphic animations (van Krieken 2018). Neither is the combination of multiple media formats a new development, “the rise of new media and technologies has actually introduced new possibilities for journalists to create immersive stories, for example, by producing multimedia stories” (van Krieken 2018: 4). Multimedia stories, especially if they also contain interactive elements, are able to immerse the audience “by offering an encompassing, distraction-free environment” (van Krieken 2018: 4).

To engage an audience increasingly disengaged from traditional news and to provide them with more contextualized information, Pavlik – Bridges (2013) examine the opportunities of using augmented reality (AR) in digital storytelling. Applying this technology, “a camera equipped smartphone or tablet pointed at a newspaper or magazine can recognize a two-dimensional image and then recall an overly pre-recorded video or 3-d object onto that image” (Pavlik – Bridges 2013: 12). Thus, AR can enrich an individual’s experience with the real world, while digital storytelling conducted by AR technology offers a more immersive experience due to the complex nonlinear storytelling model of the new media. However, the authors also emphasise that newspapers have not fully integrated AR into the storytelling experience so far, but rather use it as a marketing tool as well as for some cultural and sport reporting.

Journalism and the usage of Instagram²¹

With 1.2 billion users, Instagram was the fourth most popular social network worldwide in January 2021²². Instagram is especially popular among young adults. Although journalists and media outlets are active on Instagram, recent studies observed that “content on Instagram is predominantly apolitical and focuses on topics like fashion, travel, food and beauty” (Maares – Hanusch 2018). Originally created to share photos, the app now also allows users to post videos in five formats that are reels, Live, IGTV, Stories and video posts in the feed. The primarily audiovisual nature of the app makes it a particularly suitable tool for social media storytelling.

Social media in general, and Instagram in particular “shape journalistic norms and practices in spaces that operate outside of the institutional structures and logics of news organisations” (Hermida – Mellado 2020: 2), while these spaces have their own institutional media logics (van Dijck – Poell 2013). To understand the media logic of Instagram and to explore the journalistic norms and practices that this logic shape, Hermida – Mellado (2020) suggest a framework with five analytical dimensions: (1) structure and design, (2) aesthetics (3) genre conventions, (4) rhetorical practices and (5) interaction mechanisms and intentionality. Regarding structure and design, visual clues (mostly photographic) dominate Instagram. The design aim of these clues is to capture moments primarily in a mobile-only experience. Textual content is additional, and similarly, active links can only be added in profiles, rather than on individual posts. The aesthetics of Instagram – referring to the verbal and visual styles

21 While this research focuses on the role of Instagram in journalistic storytelling, it is important to note that other social media apps are also playing an increasingly important role in news distribution. There are very promising new developments in the use of Twitter for journalistic purposes, and emerging new platforms such as TikTok are also becoming more open to news and political topics.

22 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/>; The definition of Statista for social networks includes also video-sharing platforms (YouTube) and messengers (WhatsApp).

– can be characterized as Manovich (2017) coined it, *Instagramism*, which is an artistic and expressive tonality of the construction of scenes and images “that are atmospheric, visually perfect, emotional without being aggressive, and subtle as opposed to dramatic” (Manovich 2017: 81). Concerning the genre conventions, the original idea of Instagram as a platform for taking and sharing photos captured in the moment seems to be challenged by more measured and idealized forms of representation that require craftsmanship and attention to details. Rhetorical performances on Instagram are based on their visual style determined by three distinct visual practices: the casual, the professional and the designed ones (Manovich 2017). Finally, Instagram offers ways to connect (follow) and communicate with others (liking or commenting a post, mentioning someone...). Indeed, Hermida – Mellado (2020: 17) contend that by using the aforementioned analytical framework it becomes possible to examine how the logic of Instagram can influence journalistic performance at both the personal and the professional levels.

Vázquez-Herrero et al. (2019) analyse how the media use Instagram Stories²³. The researchers had analysed if the media are using Instagram Stories as a channel for news distribution, and also the types, topics, resources, and purposes for which Instagram uses them. Their findings “show that the media are producing ephemeral stories for Instagram with the main purpose of adapting their news contents to the functionalities of this platform and the users’ preferences” (Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 2). The study reveals the most common purposes of using Instagram by media outlets which are about to reach young audiences, to drive traffic to the website, to inform and expand content, to direct interaction with followers, to get feedback, to improve the brand image, to generate associated incomes and to encourage public participation.

23 Instagram Stories can be described “as an ephemeral microformat with a significant visual component, portrait orientation, and horizontal navigation adopted by Instagram in August 2016” (Vázquez-Herrero et al. 2019: 3).

As part of the transformative processes that are taking place on the boundaries of journalism, a “twilight zone” of lifestyle journalism formed on social network sites especially on Instagram where amateur or semi-professional journalists, the so-called influencers, publish their content in micro-blogging formats (Maares – Hanusch 2018). While journalism scholarship still predominantly focuses on journalism’s relationship with political life, there is the argument that considers lifestyle journalism as soft news is increasingly significant at a time of accelerating societal changes (Maares – Hanusch 2018: 4). Maares and Hanusch (2018) reveal significant similarities between the traditional concept of the journalistic role and the role perceptions of Instagram micro-bloggers. Having conducted interviews with Austrian and German influencers, the study found five definitional markers resonating with traditional journalistic roles and norms. A majority of the respondents conceptualized journalism as (1) text and also as (2) a set of practices, as well as (3) a profession following a range of norms which primarily concern immediacy, autonomy and ethical responsibility. A minority of respondents conceptualized journalism as (4) serving the audience and (5) a vocation (Maares – Hanusch 2018). The study concludes “traditional journalists are moving more toward the activities of micro-bloggers”.

In addition to the academic literature, manuals are also available to support journalists in developing effective professional Instagram use. Bettendorf (2019) not only gives a short overview of the current state of Instagram journalism research, but also presents successful examples and summarises the expectations and needs of the audience as well as the daily work of the Instagram journalist.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The interviews conducted for this study focused on the use by newsrooms of social media, including the purposes, tools and strategies used in the production and dissemination of news. To understand the respondents’ answers and opinions, we need

to consider the various characteristics of the investigated media, as we explored social media storytelling in assorted types of media. The possibilities and characteristics of this form of online publishing are largely determined by the ownership of the medium, its main profile, the knowledge, and resources available.

I conducted interviews with journalists from three TV stations, two public and one private, one independent news portal and one online magazine. The market positions of the media outlets in the research are highly diverse, involving long established market leading news brands and new small market share businesses, independent news portals, both public service media (PSM) and privately owned and grassroots community specific media. The aspects they all have in common is that they not only recognize the importance of a digital media presence but also have a conscious online strategy on social media news distribution. This social media activity is an important part of their overall strategy to reach and grow their audience, and all the professionals interviewed consider active communication on social media essential and unavoidable.

Challenges and strategies

It is noteworthy that social media content production is proving to be an important strategic tool for both public service, private, and community media in terms of their own specific objectives and markets, according to the interviews. The newsrooms of the interviewees face slightly different challenges, so by entering social media with their professional accounts they choose the same strategy and tools to achieve their own distinct goals. The main issue for *Tagesschau*, the long-established public service news brand in Germany was that the average age of their audiences was, in line with the demographics of the country, old (65+ years and growing older) and the brand was struggling to reach young audience segments. *Tagesschau* did so via a complete digital transformation of the brand:

“There was nothing else to do than to transform this TV brand that is familiar for its tv show every night at 8 o’clock in German television to a more 360-degree brand and I would say to a full media brand.”

Patrick Weinhold, Head of Social Media, *ARD Tagesschau*

For Hungary’s emerging, community-based, politically pro-opposition news portal *Mérce*, the challenge is to increase audience reach and to persuade the audience to habitually consume its news on a daily basis. Privately owned free-to-air TV channel *Televisão Independente (TVI)* is the most watched channel in Portugal, yet it needed to effectively connect its content to digital platforms. By contrast, Romania’s online *Decât o Revistă*, previously a print-only, quarterly non-fiction magazine, wanted to better meet the needs of its audience.

Objectives

The interviewees said the main aim of social media content production was primarily the same or very similar in most of the cases examined: to reach young people who are only available on social networks, thus rejuvenating the audience in the case of long-established, traditional media outlets. Moreover, the aim of recently established media outlets was to develop and increase their audience and encourage them to make regular visits to their accounts on various dissemination platforms. As Oana Barbonie (*Decât o Revistă*) puts it, “we have shifted from a print product to a digital first editorial strategy in the recent years to include more online storytelling, with a focus on growing our community of members.” Paula Oliveira from Portugal’s *TVI* explains that “data shows us that we have a younger audience on our online television brands, including social media than on TV”.

Within this, the operation of the Instagram accounts serves several purposes, depending on the content posted there. With content created specifically for this

platform and adapted to its specificities, it is possible to distribute news separately and independently from the original platform. Another common function of content posted on Instagram is to drive traffic to the website or the medium's Facebook page, where the primary news distribution takes place. A further function of Instagram storytelling, which several interviewees said, is the development and improvement of the media outlet's brand. For both the PSM brand *Tagesschau* and community-based independent media outlet *Mérce*, the aim is to inform and educate the audience and to shape their attitudes.

Team and resources

All the interviewees have a management role, partially or entirely, in the field of visual and social media. Patrick Weinhold leads a large social media department of 15-20 people at *ARD Tagesschau*. The regional newsroom of *Česká televize* in Brno, *Mérce* as well as *TVI* have small teams of 4-8 people, while *Decât o Revistă* does not have a dedicated social media content production team at all. In all cases, the coordination of tasks related to the management of social media accounts and the work of journalists and editors seems to be a key issue. The PSMs, *Tagesschau* and *Česká televize*, achieved this through some degree of separation and specialisation of editorial and journalistic work. The alternative is to allow the journalists, with the help of graphic editors or motion designers, to produce the social media content. This was the strategy of *TVI*, *Mérce* and *Decât o Revistă*. In the regional newsroom of *Česká televize*, young journalists or student interns are involved in the production of social media content because they are the most experienced on these platforms. The professional skills needed to manage social media are mainly present in the advertising industry rather than in the news media field, but as Oana Barbonie (*Decât o Revistă*) points out, cooperation with its members is not without difficulties due to different goals and preferences. For

journalists and newsrooms, learning these skills and adapting them to journalistic objectives and standards is a particular challenge.

Newsrooms are trying to support their journalists to produce social media stories with a variety of solutions, including manuals and templates for creating social media content. Patrick Weinhold mentions that *Tagesschau* has a small but dedicated Innovation Laboratory, which is constantly creating and testing new formats to keep up with current social media trends.

“It is hard to find the right tool for journalists to promote and rethink their own stories for social media. Using set templates (created in Google Slides for example) helped with this and kept the content consistent in the beginning.”

Oana Barbonie, visual editor, *Decât o Revistă*

Several interviewees point out that creating high-quality social media content, which is appropriate for the platform is a resource-intensive task. For example, as much as 50% of *Tagesschau*'s online human resources spend their professional time on social media news distribution. At the same time, an emerging, community-based, independent news portal, such as *Mérce*, while keen, does not have sufficient resources to optimize its website for smartphones.

Platforms, content, and resources

A focus of the interviews was the use of Instagram for news distribution, but other social media platforms were discussed. In this context, the use of Facebook seems to be common. Four out of the five newsrooms interviewed report having Twitter (*Tagesschau*, *TVI*, *Decât o Revistă* and the regional newsroom of *Česká televize*) and YouTube (*Tagesschau*, *TVI*, *Decât o Revistă* and *Mérce*) accounts. *Decât o Revistă* regularly

uses LinkedIn, and Patrick Weinhold of *Tagesschau* reports the highly successful use of TikTok, which allows access to the youngest age groups, which *Decât o Revistă* is also planning to do. The need to differentiate content in terms of type and genre, and the need to reach a variety of user groups, are the main reasons for the presence on multiple platforms.

The journalistic content posted on Instagram accounts ranges widely, most respondents report that they produce content specifically for social networking sites. The interviewees said their media outlets used one or more of the following types of content (social media genres or subgenres): summaries of articles, recommendations (movies, music, books), original stories (for example photo reportages), IGTV videos, Instagram takeovers from people invited, polls created to find certain information from the readers, quotes, posts that promote their other media content (newsletter, podcast, video, article) or other platform. Each newsroom has developed its own set of tools, i.e., a set of certain types of resources such as native texts, own photos, own videos, emojis, infographics, illustrations, collages, mentions of other profiles, journalists or contributors and hashtags. Instagram provides certain features that can be used effectively for journalistic purposes: the so-called highlights, the swipe up option, or the poll and question box in stories allow journalists both to archive ephemeral content (stories) and to direct traffic to a website or connect with their followers.

Social media skills in journalism education

In most cases, our interviewees acquired the necessary knowledge and skills for social media through hands-on practice in previous jobs, rather than through formal education. Several interviewees mention they had also gained a lot of useful knowledge in their own private social media practice, which they then use for their professional tasks. All interviewees say there is a need in journalism education to teach skills

that will help journalists to work in the field of social media. They all emphasise, in particular, the need for skills in visual editing, social media management, social media analysis (understanding metrics and native tools) and general digital competences. Karina Csengel (*Mérce*) points out that as branding is also an important function of these social media accounts, journalists involved in this should also be aware of the techniques involved. All the interviewees shared the opinion that the use of social networking sites for journalistic purposes requires not only continuous learning, but also experimentation and analysis of social media metrics and audience behaviour.

“I would appreciate it if universities put at least one mandatory subject ‘Basics of Social Media Storytelling’ in every Journalism or Media Studies programme. Lecturers should explain how the most popular social networking sites work, audience behaviour, different alternatives of creation of posts etc. For Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.”

Ondřej Šimeček, news editor, *Česká televize*

Patrick Weinhold emphasises that in addition to journalism and social media skills, journalism education should also include basic political and social skills, and that a combination of the two is the best way forward.

Public service in the social media

A surprising lesson from the interviews is that with the right structure, sufficient allocation of resources and appropriate social media strategy, any traditional PSM can have an effective presence on social media sites. This is despite the widespread assumption that PSM typically lag in the context of reaching audiences online.

Of the two PSM in this study, *ARD Tagesschau* had the most successful and effective social media storytelling strategy. Beyond the limits of the current study, *ARD*

Tagesschau is a nationwide leader in terms of market position, audience reach, number of social media platforms used and share of resources devoted to social media content production. *ARD Tagesschau* was an early adopter of social media in journalism, as the corporation has significant financial resources, a comparatively large number of staff working in social media news distribution, and a focus on continuous improvement (see above for *Tagesschau's* dedicated Innovation Laboratory). Interestingly, the use of digital platforms and portable devices can also open up possibilities of participatory journalism for PSM, as the example of *Česká televize* shows.

“We have to fulfil our public-law character every day, which doesn't leave us (especially in daily news) much room for manoeuvres. On the other hand, we implemented mobile journalism as an everyday routine, which means that some reporters go to the field only with a tripod, handy [mobile phone] (as camera) and microphone. We also use more public generated content. Our TV created a project called “iReporter” which means that everyone could become part of the broadcasting. People send us video of weather, car accidents, local events etc.”

Ondřej Šimeček, News Editor, *Česká televize*

At the same time, social media sites also create a robust competitive environment for PSM.

Conclusion

In summary, the components of effective and efficient social media communication for newsrooms include providing the necessary human and financial resources for social media news distribution, continuously monitoring digital trends, analysing audience behaviour, developing and constantly innovating formats that are appropriate for

the platform and audience expectations. All this requires well-trained journalists with social media storytelling skills, marketing and advertising knowledge as well as societal (political, public, economic and cultural) awareness, which is currently in high demand in the market.

Graphic Journalism and Comics Reportage

Gyula Maksa (University of Pécs)

Two Trends in Graphic Journalism

In recent years, we have seen two major tendencies in graphic or comics journalism that are at first glance distinct from each other. One is the flourishing of data journalism that works with data and creates data visualization, such as infographics, figures, or maps. Media discourse analysis conventionally treats figures and infographics as having an objectivity effect (Koren 1996), i.e. as a tool or procedure designed to develop and reinforce a sense of objectivity (or an illusion of it), while it is also obvious that the construction of maps and infographics is culturally determined. For example, in connection with the current maps that school systems and the media use, it is reasonable to ask what interests, beliefs, worldviews and mental maps lie behind the individual instances of cartographic representation.

The other tendency, a contrary one, is the ongoing “reinvention” of decidedly subjective journalistic drawing, regarded as an opinion genre, while more recently comics reportage also gains increasing popularity through its subjectivity and its expressed relationship to the represented. However, these two types of graphic journalism and their use show similarities. They demand time from both the creator and the recipient — and they encourage the reader to dwell on the work, due partly to the expectations stripped from the routines of linear reading, and their tabularity, and the visual representation placed within the space of the page. Comics journalism, the explicitly subjective comics reportage, and data journalism reinventing objectivity with data visualization and infographics are versions of graphic journalism and

investigative journalism as well. Instead of the indigestible, constantly rolling and multiplying images of news and actualities, they provide the opportunity for a slower, and deeper reception – potentially reflecting the trend of Slow Journalism (Le Masurier 2020).

Comics Reportage as a (Trans)media Genre

Also informed by the centuries-old tradition of newspaper illustrations, but mainly reflecting the generic characteristics of the autobiographic graphic novel (and certainly inspired by its success), comics reportage developed at the intersection of journalistic practice and comics drawing. The genre became popular in both the North American Comics, and the French-Belgian(-Swiss) bande dessinée tradition since the turn of the millennium (Bourdieu 2012). Joe Sacco's influential war report *Palestine* (1993) played a crucial role in the recognition and institutionalisation of the genre. Indeed Sacco canonized certain characteristics of the genre through the impact of the Maltese-born US comics journalist's reports on the Middle East and the Balkan Wars. Sacco's works, although retaining some of the authentication procedures of conventional reporting, including references to real space and time, make a spectacular break with the requirement of journalistic objectivity. The author-narrator-protagonist is, therefore, in a sense, an autobiographic reporter who draws himself into the narrative, and becomes a character and participant in the events. He reflects on the impressions, experiences, and feelings he encountered during his field work, as well as on his own cultural background and biographical history. The latter feature also links the comic book report to autobiographical works. He observes, represents, and sometimes comments on everyday occurrences, and his conversations with local people are also "put on stage". Creating comics reportage presupposes both journalistic and cartoonist work and skills, and in

the case of the autobiographical tradition (and the tradition heralded by Sacco) one person should possess all these skills. In a lecture, Swiss Francophone comics journalist Patrick Chappatte explained that his work in the field is similar to his traditional reporter role: he takes notes, conducts interviews and takes photographs (Chappatte 2011b).

Based on his professional identification, the work of Patrick Chappatte clearly demonstrates the emergence of the comics reportage genre in various media environments, and its ability and suitability to spread across different medias, which media narratology equates to transmédiagénie (see Marion 1997). Patrick Chappatte has produced over thirty pieces of comics reportage. They were published in his 2011 book *BD Reporter. Du “printemps arabe” aux coulisses de l’Élysée* (Chappatte 2011a) and in various Swiss, Italian, French, and US-based magazines. The reportages covered a wide variety of topics and locations, from Nairobi’s “tin town” through the French presidential palace to the world of drug offenders in Guatemala and the daily life of residents in the vicinity of the minefields of South Lebanon. The bilingual website bdreportage.com/graphicjournalism.com provides web adaptations of his works published in the Swiss newspaper *Le Temps* as well as the television version of his South Lebanon report. The cartoonist’s highly optimistic, hopeful, committed TED lectures in the style of stand-up shows — also in French and English — review the generic characteristics of comics reportage, and the potentials represented by its mediatic spread (Chappatte 2010; 2011b).

Patrick Chappatte’s works are not novel-like, longer narratives — unlike Joe Sacco’s influential works which defined the genre, such as *Palestine* (1993 and 1996, in one volume 2001), *Goražde* (2000) or *The Fixer* (2003). There are also Francophone examples of longer journalistic graphic novels, which are more suitable for the book medium. This is exemplified by the nonfiction graphic novel *Le Photographe* (The Photographer 2003-2006, in one volume: 2008), a work by Emmanuel Guibert, Didier Lefèvre and Frédéric Lemercier, which prominently features photographs and the materials of the

photojournalist, and combines the solutions of photography and comics in connection with the subject of Afghanistan, where the work of the photojournalist is framed by drawn comics elements. At the same time, *The Photographer* also represents a direction of comics journalism detached from the autobiographical tradition. It is precisely the diversity of the skills of the journalist, the drawer, the photographer, sometimes the inker etc., all of which are necessary for the creation of comics journalism which might create an ideal setting for collective work.

Comics Journalism and Everyday Life

Riad Sattouf, successful in a several comics genres, also created longer reportages and graphic novels which beg for a book-format. One of the most striking trademarks of Riad Sattouf is his timeliness. Sattouf tries to locate self-transforming estrangement within an area that is closer to himself both geographically and culturally, as opposed to the comics journalists who often travel to remote countries. From 2004, the French author published comics journals that are characterized by serious social criticism, and a satirical tone that simultaneously triggers worry and laughter in the reader, works which are informed by an autobiographical aspect that is sometimes even more explicit than in Joe Sacco's works. Along this line, the 2004 *No Sex in New York*, first published in sequels in the daily newspaper *Libération*, then published as a colour album, is about the members of the French "intern generation" living in the USA (Sattouf 2004). The 2005 *Back to High School* (Retour au collège) is a reportage about the small world of an elite gymnasium in Paris (Sattouf 2005). The following paragraphs discuss a series by Riad Sattouf, which cannot be regarded as a clear case in terms of either novel-like or journalism-like features, but is a work also available on book media which can be regarded as an example of comics journalism and participates in the generic tradition of journalistic graphic novels.

Riad Sattouf's three-volume *The Secret Life of Young People* (La vie secrète des jeunes 2007, 2010, 2012) occupies a unique place within the world of comics journalism. One-page micronarratives of the volumes were originally published as "editorial cartoons" in the satirical journal *Charlie Hebdo*, famous for its scandals, lawsuits, bans and the January 2015 attack. *Charlie Hebdo* usually reflects on current political and public events with its cartoons and comics. The book medium, the paper quality and the covers combine to trigger the expectations of the roman graphique in the reader, while the abundance as well as the fragmentary nature of micronarratives undermine the image of novel-like comics reportage. Using everyday examples "seen and heard" on the streets, *The Secret Life of Young People* puts the violation of certain rules and habits of behaviour, social coexistence, and culture into spotlight, sometimes also revealing the hypocritical attempts to conceal such violations. Despite the fragmentary nature, the volumes deliver a weird, upsetting, yet ridiculous image of the metropolitan society in France. This is a satirical tableaux where traces of overemphasised, repressed, monetized sexuality can appear in various places and situations through characters ranging from prostituted middle-class girls and precocious sex-hungry little boys to headscarf wearing Muslim women licking ice-cream in an erotic way. Typical locations are the spaces of fast-food chains and public transport, and so the inescapable transience of everyday life in the metropolitan city becomes emphatic. However, the volumes do not provide the comprehensive narrative characteristic of the more traditional report books, just fragmentary notes with frequent gestures of authentication, which are further reinforced by the preface of the first book promising to expose human habits and behaviour. In *The Secret Life of Young People* the cartoonist does not appear on the scene as in traditional comics journals, and the commentary-like voice also plays a reduced role.

“Expat” Graphic Novels

An emerging genre, similar to comics reportage, depicting the experience of countries, languages and cultures distant from the home of the reporter, could be referred to as the “expat graphic novel”. The genre largely originates in the work of the Canadian Guy Delisle, who was born in Quebec, but publishes in France. The narrator of these graphic novels transfers from his own country to a foreign linguistic-cultural environment. Such a situation emerges in Delisle’s novels, first published in 2000, either or both because of the narrator-protagonist’s work as an animated filmmaker, and the missions of his spouse, Nadège, who works for the international aid organisation Doctors Without Borders. The first group includes novels describes North Korean and Chinese experiences, and the second includes “expat experiences” in Burma and Israel/Palestine, exhibiting the everyday life and the relationships with the locals and other expats (Delisle 2000; 2003; 2007; 2011). Delisle’s novels are autobiographies which are not free from geopolitical topics. However, frequent topics of international journalism, such as North Korean propaganda and Israeli West Bank Wall, here appear in the comics narrator’s subjective perspective, usually depicted on the level of the practices of daily life. The novel set in Jerusalem also features a comics reportage part, but its narrative framework suggests deviation from the genre, emphasising even more that outside this experiment we are not reading a comics reportage, and therefore it is not recommended to approach this graphic novel along the expectations of general journalism and comics reportages.

Unlike Joe Sacco, the founding father of comics journalism, Guy Delisle, is not a professional journalist. As travel literature expert Jelena Bulić points out in her thorough analysis of Delisle’s novels, these works are not journalistic reports (“reportages”) in the sense of Joe Sacco. They are rather accounts (“reports”) that bypass the canonical conventions of travel literature and travel-related media narratives, and attempt to convey the experience of everyday life. The daily routine

is also discussed in detail regarding topics such as work, cooking or childcare – a kind of thematization not unusual in autobiographical comics and autobiographies (Bulić 2012: 63). The experience of everyday life here is also the experience of violence in Israeli-Palestinian everyday life (Fall 2014: 100). The issue of using the generic descriptor documentary comics (*BD documentaire*) occurs precisely in connection with the analysis of Guy Delisle’s novel *Chroniques de Jerusalem* (Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City). Lisa Auquier’s essay provides a detailed discussion of the problem of documentary comics: the term has a narrower meaning separating it from comics journals, as well as a broader sense covering non-autobiographic historical comics (Auquier 2015).

A Practice-Oriented Approach

Besides the academic literature, a guide entitled *Creating Comics as Journalism, Memoir & Nonfiction* authored by Duncan et al. (2016) is also available to support journalists in developing comics journalism skills and practices. The book considers comics journalism as nonfiction comics, a kind of longform journalism, narrative nonfiction. From this point of view, the creator combines journalistic and artistic approaches with the historian’s process. This manual proposes tools and presents examples related to data collection, verbal and visual storytelling, publication, and production process. The House of Press Caricatures (*La Maison du dessin de Presse*) in Morges (Switzerland) has its own seven pages long teaching material about comics journalism. This publication related to an exhibition focuses mainly on the francophone bande dessinée, and could be also interesting (Pernet 2012).

From a training-related perspective of journalism education, the problem or claim of “authenticity” related to credibility and subjectivity in comics journalism practices of representation, and generally in nonfiction comics, seems to be a crucial

issue (Bake – Zöhrer 2017; Duncan et al. 2016: 154-158; Weber – Rall 2017). Wibke Weber and Hans-Martin Rall focus on the investigation of visual authentication strategies in graphic storytelling: “What are the visual strategies to demonstrate that the drawn pictures show well-researched news stories that are factually accurate and therefore authentic?” (2017: 377). They identify six visual authentication strategies that are often used in comics journalism: author’s presence (to show the comics author at work), physical resemblance, visual stylistic devices (differentiating comics journalism from fictional comics), documentary evidence (e.g., maps, statistical data, interviews with experts), and metastory (the story about the story, making the production process transparent) (Weber – Rall 2017: 385-389).

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The interviews with five journalists from all countries under study in this book focused on the status quo of comics journalism in each country, including comics journalism education. Each interview consisted of three parts. The first part concerned the self-introduction of the interviewee, their professional background, education, relation with comics and graphic journalism in detail, recent projects related to graphic journalism, and how they could get the skills they need to become experts in this field. The second group of questions focused on the situation of graphic (comics) journalism in the respective media cultures of the interviewees, publications, financial resources, main topics, issues, graphic styles, genres, carriers, translations, current relevance and future perspectives, and the problems of credibility. The third part of the interview intended to get information about education related to graphic (comics) journalism, not only on the actual situation of graphic journalism education in each country, but also on the ideal type of comics journalism education, alongside background knowledge and practical experience students should have.

The status quo of comics journalism

While graphic journalism may include all kinds of journalistic products and activities in graphic expression, which are not in the scope of this research, a stricter definition of graphic journalism is closer to the notion of comics journalism including cartoons, comic strips and other longer narratives in comics. Comics journalism is a journalistic contribution in the comics form. Comics journalism in a stricter sense may include reportages in comics (or in graphic novel format), so a kind of graphic reportage. In summary, there are three levels of graphic journalism: 1. visual journalism (also includes data journalism), 2. comics and cartoons as a media genre, 3. comics reportage (or reportage comics). In the interviews, we focused mainly on the third level.

Comics journalism may raise some issues from the point of view of the interviewees. The main challenge is the “relative non-existence” of this kind of journalism (mentioned by German comics expert Axel Halling) in the examined countries, which equates to the almost total ignorance by mainstream media. Independent magazines, art groups, NGOs, or (as in Hungary) literary reviews provide publication opportunities for such pieces of journalism. A concern of Ferenc Vincze, who works at the Hungarian magazine *Szépirodami Figyelő* is the lack of translations into Hungarian of the significant authors of the comics reportage tradition. There are financial issues, because the main sources of revenue are advertising and digital subscriptions, although the occasional grant and public support do facilitate the realisation of the few publications that do exist. The issue of credibility, both developing and respecting it, is another important issue in the contexts of sources, talking about processes, and transparency as this interviewee explains:

“I think that mentioning the sources, as you would in traditional journalism, is an important rule even for graphic journalism. And talking about the process and the

rewriting part to suit a comic after all is also a very essential step to achieve transparency, therefore more credibility.”

Oana Barbonie, Visual Editor, *Decât o Revistă*

Clear visuality could help building credibility, too, as Axel Halling explains: “Quality, quality, quality! Clear visuality, not too arty in style for the non-comic-readers.” Credibility building faces another challenge, as Ferenc Vincze elucidates: “For the public sphere, comics belongs to the category of children’s literature, or it is treated as a marginal media, which cannot explain relevant issues.”

According to most respondents, either or both graphic journalism and comics journalism are nowadays even more relevant (digital and print formats of comics journalism are both equally important), but not widespread. Their lack of availability is in contrast to other genres of graphic journalism, such as data journalism or infographics, which have become increasingly popular. Some countries seem to consider comics journalism projects sometimes as civic education programmes, rather than as a traditional journalistic genre. For example, the Germany’s initiative Alphabet des Ankommens²⁴ (Alphabet of Arrival) about migration supported by the Federal Agency for Civic Education, and Romania’s project on education Școala9²⁵. Axel Halling emphasises that the same point applies to innovations from other countries like *Revue Dessinée*, a Francophone specialized journal in comics journalism²⁶.

The differences between the perceptions of the interviewees sometimes seem to depend on their cultural backgrounds. The interviewees from the Czech Republic and Hungary, emphasise the important satirical, caricature or humorous traditions of graphic journalism, in contrast to the other three interviewees who did not underline these traditions of graphical representation. Yet, the different perspectives and

24 www.alphabetdesankommens.de

25 www.scoala9.ro/

26 www.4revues.fr/la-revue-dessinee/

perceptions could also be the basis for the differing professional experiences of the interviewees. The respondents have worked as a data journalist (Boček), an academic/scriptwriter/editor (Vincze), a programme manager and cultural manager (Halling), a web designer/illustrator (Gabriel Sousa) and a visual artist/illustrator/reporter/editor (Barbonie).

Comics journalism and journalism education

All the experts acquired their own skills and competences in the field of comics journalism by self-education and are thus autodidacts. They have backgrounds in a wide variety of disciplines such as comparative literature, journalism, visual anthropology, graphic design, informatics, political science, Eastern and South-Eastern European history, Eastern European studies, and Hungarian studies. They did not receive any formal training in graphic journalism. However, they did a lot of reading in this field and thus gained practical experience, which helped their self-education, as Oana Barbonie says: “I learned from books and from international publications and from practicing by myself.” Ferenc Vincze also points towards international sources as a core inspiration: “I did not participate in such education, because there was no opportunity for this in Hungary. I got information mainly from international publications, and I read those few Hungarian publications on this topic that were available around 2010.”

The interviewees had to rely on self-education, because they claim none of their nations’ educational systems have integrated comics journalism into the journalism curricula. Some of the interviewees point to related fields of higher education, in which comics journalism is represented: visual literacy, art education and communication studies. But comics journalism as investigative journalism may be a relatively new subject for journalism or art education. The interviewees mention practical experience

as a key competence to realize comics journalism projects and to become a good comics journalist. Axel Halling, who also is a board member of the German Comics Association, says that “a lot of reading” is a core competence.

“Practical experiences are key here. Sometimes you can check this by only showing students real work and make them wonder how that was put together. For example, it is possible that a lot of students had never seen a comic in the pages of a newspaper. And it’s great to show them how to create comics but they will not feel ready to put it in practice until they have something to compare it to. Showing beginning reporters what journalism and graphic journalism actually looks like might help them more; even making them redo something in their own style might be a very important step in their education.”

Oana Barbonie, Visual Editor, *Decât o Revistă*

The respondents emphasise that knowledge of comics history, comics studies, journalism, comics journalism through the key texts of comics reportages, practices, practical experience are important components of graphic journalism education. Gabriel Sousa says a good graphic journalism education programme will cover many aspects of comics media: “To study comics, [there] should be created a diversified programme covering several areas: drawing, colour, anatomy, theoretical classes on the various phases of comics, philosophy and studies about the possibilities of new media, as well as notions of sales strategy.” The interviewees do not recall any best practices in comics journalism training, due to the perceived lack of this genre in education. They point towards the abovementioned education projects, but these are located in the field of civic education, and not in journalism or media education.

Conclusion

In summary, comics journalism is an emerging field that exists on the margins of mainstream media. Yet, it seems to be a promising genre, not only “because comics allow people to find themselves”, as Gabriel Sousa says. Comics can play the traditional roles of media in a new way: information, entertainment, education in graphic expression (Mbiye Lumbala 2009: 190). While being self-educated experts, the interviewees could express expectations that can help to lay out a framework for future education in this field.

Improving Democratic Sensibility

Klára Smejkal, Lenka Waschková Císařová (Masaryk University)

Even though their democratic role is clear for most journalists and journalism students, the new challenges of potential pressures (e.g., political, economic, public service media, technological innovation) and their ethical solutions make it necessary to focus on improving democratic sensibility in journalism and media education. This field covers the following specific three aspects: (1) the media and journalists in democratic societies; (2) the power of the media in democratic societies; and (3) the responsibility of journalists in a democratic society.

Media and Journalists in Democratic Societies

Unsurprisingly, researchers conclude that politicians and journalists need each other – the media needs something to report about and politicians need to be reported about (e.g., Beattie 2019; Van Dalen 2019). Society perceives the media in the traditional *normative theory of journalism* as an essential part of democracy: “A democracy is dependent on a well-informed citizenship, and it is up to journalism to provide the people with accurate and reliable information based on which to make informed political decisions” (McNair 2008: 238; see also Fenton 2009). Thus, according to proponents of normative theory, where there is no journalism, there is no democracy, and vice versa (Carey 1999). The *independence and plurality of the media* are frequent indicators that measure the quality of democracy (Landman 2012; Jakubowicz 2017). For example, research by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) confirms that only informed citizens make

responsible policy decisions because they appear to have more involvement in politics, more stable and thoughtful attitudes, and tend to choose political candidates that match their views.

The normative theory of journalism argues the media has three functions: (1) *civic* – the media should act as a forum, in which citizens can discuss social themes and where citizens meet with the state, according to Habermas’s theory of the public sphere; (2) *watch-dog* – the media defend human and political rights and call politicians to account; (3) *mobilization* – the media seeks to mobilize citizens to be more curious about politics and to encourage participation. Its main role is in mediating opportunities for citizen comments and public debate (Jakubowicz, 2017).

Nevertheless, society has reached a stage characterized by the weakened influence of citizens; society is permeated by media and economic forces that are trying to make the most of the opportunity to put pressure on the political system (Blühdorn 2007; Jakubowicz 2017). In addition, there is increasing media coverage of politics – politicians are trying to adapt to media logic, so their actions have shrunk to media-interesting topics that lose their ideological essence (Jakubowicz 2017). The situation also incorporates other current trends, such as *commodification*, *digitization*, changing *audience routines* (Macek 2015), and the expansion of *fake news* (Egelhofer – Lecheler 2019).

Another challenge for the media is increasing *political polarization*, which Inglehart and Norris (2019) contend is caused by the division of society into socially liberal and socially conservative groups. Moreover, technological, economic, and political changes influence the *fragmentation of media*, allowing audiences to consume only the content that matches their beliefs and thematic interests, which may increase political and *media polarization* (Tewksbury – Rittenberg 2012).

Thus, when there is a decline in *trust in traditional political elites* in politically polarized countries, there is also a decline in *trust in the professional media* (Hanitzsch et al. 2017; Van Dalen 2019). This may be due, among other things, to the recent

emergence of a large number of media outlets that hold specific positions of opinion and tend, along with far-right populist politicians, to undermine trust in professional media and label them “heralds of biased elites”. A number of academic texts refer to these media outlets as *alternative media* (Rauch 2015).

Power of the Media in Democratic Societies

To understand mutual relations in democratic societies, it is necessary to understand the power relations, which is the aim of the research field *political economy of the media* (Mosco 2009: 1996). This field focuses on complex dynamics, as it “explores the relationship among commodities, institutions, social relations and hegemony, and explores the determination among these elements ... (encompasses) discussion of the policy problems and moral issues ... (and is oriented) towards actual social change and practice” (Wasko 2005: 26–27). Political economy studies focus particularly on *media ownership* (Wasko 2005) and control (Hanitzsch – Mellado 2011; Amado – Waisbord 2018); *media ownership/market concentration* and conversely *media plurality* (Bagdikian 2004; Kostadinova 2015); and the *commodification and commercialization* of media (Gulyás 2003). Political economists have discussed the media in relation to the *public sphere*, *public citizenship*, and democracy: “While acknowledging the powerful role that capital plays in media, researchers have argued that this relationship has a direct bearing on citizenship and public participation” (Wasko 2014: 263). Although this approach to media studies has been in place for over half a century, it is just as relevant today for new trends and new media. As Wasko (2014: 267) points out, “‘new’ media technologies often present a good deal of continuity, especially in terms of corporate involvement, commercialization and commodification”.

Nevertheless, some of Europe’s media systems, such as the post-communist (Gulyás 2003; Gross 2004) and the post-transitive (Jebri et al. 2013) are currently

experiencing a radical transformation of power relations in terms of growing state influence. Prime examples, of which, are the media in Hungary and Poland (see Castro-Herrero et al. 2016; Polonska – Beckett 2019; Surowiec – Štětka 2020). Local businessmen are becoming media outlet owners, which restrict *journalistic professional autonomy* (Stetka 2010; Stetka 2012; Stetka – Örnebring 2013; Waschková Císařová – Metyková 2015; Štětka 2016; Surowiec – Štětka 2020).

Similarly, *public service media* (PSM) currently face political pressure, which traditionally is the tendency of politicians to interfere in PSM's content, control, or funding (Nowak 2014). These pressures are broadly from ultra-right populist politicians, who label all professional media as the “mouthpiece of biased elites” (Fawzi 2018; Krämer 2018; Schulz 2019; Schulze 2020). As Schulz et al. (2019) found, in most cases, commercial television seems to reach populist audiences better than PSM (see Figure 1), and people with populist attitudes seem to trust PSM significantly less in some countries (e.g., Spain, Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, and the United Kingdom).

Research of the challenges that PSM face has focused primarily on technological changes and adaptation to the *converged media environment* (Cushion 2019; Donders 2019). Additionally, the pressures of commercial media, which perceive PSM as a natural rival that is freely available to all and thus disrupts the media market, are also widely discussed (Horsti et al. 2014; Cushion 2019; Vyslouzilova 2019). These current tendencies towards the instrumentalization of both private media and PSM have an impact on journalists' autonomy and self-censorship, and this affects public *trust in media*.

Particularly in the Czech Republic, “opinion polls have been continuously showing declining trust in media – which has sunk by 20 per cent during the last ten years, according to the Centre for Public Opinion Research” (Štětka 2016: 7). A similar trend can be seen around the world. For example, as the *Digital News Report 2020* shows, the level of trust in the media in that year was at its lowest point since the Reuters Institute first measured it (Newman et al. 2020).

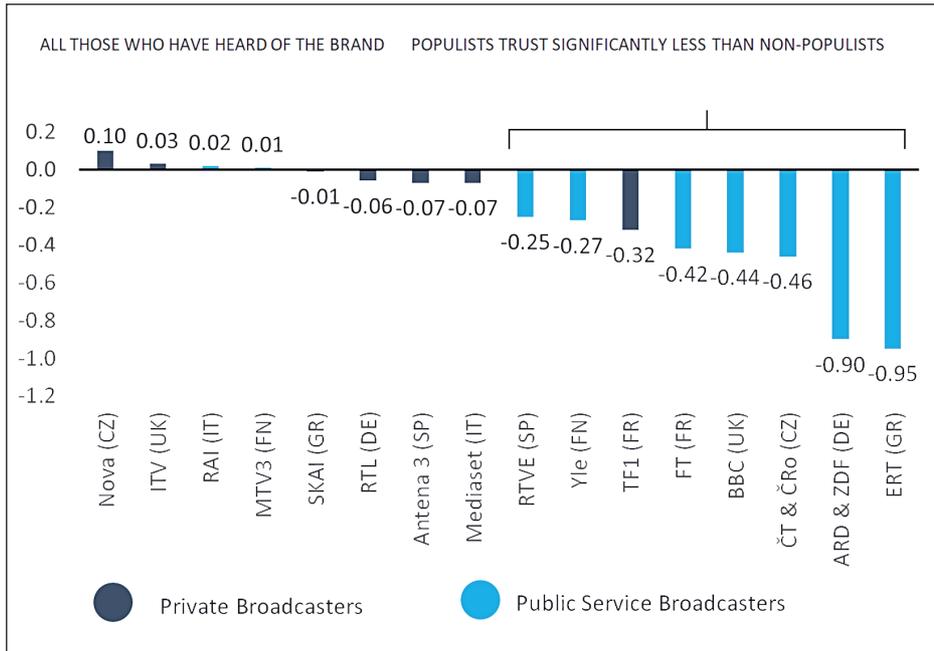


Figure 1: Difference between average trust scores of populists and non-populists
 Source: Authors based on Schulz et al. (2019: 28)

Responsibility of Journalists in Democratic Societies

Society traditionally considers politicians and media owners to be the sources of not only pressure on the media but also the disruption of *journalistic professional autonomy* (Borden 2000; Nygren 2012; Matić 2016; Amado – Waisbord 2018) and the reason for journalists’ *self-censorship* (Schimpfössl – Yablokov 2020; Schimpfössl et al. 2020).

However, these pressures usually do not manifest as open and direct interference; they are rather more subtle (e.g., economic constraints, the spread of certain values, the organisational culture; Coulson – Hansen 1995; Meier 2002; Metyková – Waschková Čisářová 2009). Moreover, journalists rarely reflect openly on professional pressure. Journalistic professional autonomy is an important part of how journalism fulfils its democratic function and how journalists manifest their *independence* and *professionalism* (Deuze 2005). Örnebring (2013: 39) suggests journalistic autonomy is “the degree of self-governance within the profession, and the extent to which the profession is independent of other societal institutions” (see also Hanitzsch – Mellado 2011; Reich – Hanitzsch 2013; Skovsgaard 2014; Örnebring et al. 2016; Lauk – Harro-Loit 2017). As Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) remind us, if practitioners of journalism fail to maintain independence from those they cover or if they are unable to serve as independent monitors of power, the content they create ceases to be professional journalism.

The concentration of media ownership has a potential impact on journalists’ autonomy (Reich – Hanitzsch 2013). Singer (2006) considers journalists on the individual level as *socially responsible journalists*, who choose *accountability*, *trustworthiness* (see also Waisbord 2018; Carlson 2018), and *servicing the public interest* in the framework of *journalistic ethics*. Other authors stress the *individual roles of journalists* (Hanitzsch – Vos 2018; 2017). Moreover, new technology, and specifically social media, bring new challenges for journalists and their responsibilities (e.g., *online branding*; Hanusch – Bruns 2016; Olausson 2017; Molyneux et al. 2017; Molyneux et al. 2018; Molyneux 2019).

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The interviews we conducted focused on how journalists perceive the relationship between media, journalists, and democracy; both regarding the traditional assumption of their co-dependence and its development as well as the new economic, political, and technological trends which can influence it. Our sample of interviewees was quite coherent, most of them work for non-profit organisations, in either investigative institutions or training centres. In the context of *improving democratic sensibility*, the interviewees mainly emphasise the importance of emancipating professional journalism from online platforms and strengthening trust in media; as well as the importance of up-to-date, long-term and ongoing training for journalists.

Media and Journalists in Democratic Societies

The interviewees understand media as a vital part of democratic society. They mention mostly the *watch-dog function* of the media and the *civic function*, both of which can be understood as parts of the public service of media (Jakubowicz 2017). As the Czech investigative reporter Pavla Holcová adds, “anything that isn’t critical is PR and I think all those clichés about watchdogs are true”. Respondents also mention the *mobilization function* of media, but in a specific sense – as the director of the Centre for Independent Journalism, Ioana Avădani points out, “journalists should obey all the laws of the country and if they don’t like them, they should not break them but rather try to change them”. But at the same time there are several catches: those media which should be vital for democracy have to be free and independent; and there should be boundaries between media outlets with own professional content and those platforms that only present content created by someone else (e.g. Facebook; Google).

“The media are called the watchdog of democracy and also the fourth estate. But media are powerless power, they cannot change anything by themselves. They can be impactful, if the other three powers are correctly performing their tasks. The role of the media is just to expose wrongdoing and it is up to the other three powers to take the issue from them.”

Ioana Avădani, Director, Centre for Independent Journalism, Romania

Media and power

The biggest challenge for mutual relations in democratic society are the power relations of the actors – journalists, owners, advertisers, and politicians. As the interviewees point out, one of the consequences of economic and political developments in European countries is the transition of business-oriented media to the non-profit sector. On one hand, this move can be understood as a consequence of journalists’ assumption that the key concept is that of *striving for media and journalism independence*. This refers to independence from ever-concentrating media ownership of local businessmen; from advertisers; or from growing state influence (Polonska – Beckett 2019; Surowiec – Štětka 2020; Castro-Herrero et al. 2016).

“Advertising is the biggest source of revenue, but it gives advertising agencies a lot of power, so they are very aggressive. They’ve started challenging editorial conditions to get a contract. They think they can have their say in what the content looks like.”

Ioana Avădani, Director, Centre for Independent Journalism, Romania

On the other hand, the transformation of media organisations into NGOs can be understood as a way to solve problems with the sustainability of the traditional business models. These new types of newsrooms usually have other sources of funding than

advertising, e.g. donation-based financing; membership programmes or partnerships with other media. Nevertheless, that does not mean it's an easier way. As director of *investigace.cz* Holcová says: "We need to devote more and more time and energy to fundraising at the expense of investigative work." Co-founder of the Hungarian investigative reporting centre András Pethő has experience with a supporter who tried to influence the content: "We gave our supporters the opportunity to get in touch with topics that interest them. Once a supporter came to us to write a story about him and we refused. He was quite grumpy."

The story of Paolo Agostinho, the editor of Portugal's *Lusa News Agency*, shows that blurring of ownership and organisational status are elements in the problematic framework of media existence: the financing of *Lusa* is partly public and partly private.

"The ownership of the news agency – it is awful, you can quote me. Historically, we are the losers, partly public, partly private. I think we have the worst scenario. The private sector doesn't invest anything, they want the revenue. And we have the rules of the public employer, so we are locked in several areas. The best model is either completely private or completely public."

Paolo Agostinho, Editor, *Lusa News Agency*, Portugal

Other connections to the power relations between media and society are based on the connections between journalists and politicians. In line with journalistic faith in the watch-dog role of media, interviewees consider the relationship between journalists and politicians as unwanted and ideally non-existent at all, so as not to interfere with journalistic work. Nevertheless, the interviewees admit that journalists need politicians as sources. As news agency editor Agostinho expresses: "I don't believe in a friendship between a journalist and a politician, because the politician is a source. If the source is my friend, I have a problem. I am either his friend or the journalist. I can't be both."

The relation between journalists and politicians is further complicated by the current trend of politicians who communicate with citizens directly through social media; therefore, they are no longer dependent on journalists and professional media (see Van Dalen 2019). By contrast, journalists are perceived as being increasingly dependent on politicians' online posts and willing to take anything as a quotation. The interviewees see a clear link between this development and the weakening of democracy.

“It is a distribution problem and obviously we can't get back to the old times, when journalists were the gatekeepers. And I don't think that it was good, it was not very democratic, but what we have now is bad for journalists but also for democracy.”

András Pethő, Editor, *Direkt36*, Hungary

On the level of individual journalists, the power struggle can manifest itself in various forms and is reflected by the perceived degree of *journalistic professional autonomy* (Amado – Waisbord 2018; Matić 2016; Nygren 2012; Borden 2000). The interviewees from the non-profit newsrooms consider themselves lucky as they do not need to fight for their autonomy against internal or external pressures. Nevertheless, they see the potential problems of mostly owners' and economic pressures in other newsrooms. Jonathan Sachse, co-founder of the German non-profit investigative newsroom *Correctiv*, considers media owners' pressures in Germany as a problem: “It is the conflict between money and editorial independence.”

Nevertheless, the interviewees mention other individual challenges for the improvement of democratic sensibility – *burn-out* and *insecurity*. Security is also one of the most common themes among respondents when discussing technological innovation in investigative newsrooms.

“Like every newsroom, we receive hate messages every day. Especially our fact-checking team gets a lot of hate feedback. They make corrections to misinformation. And especially women in the team get aggressive emails. It really is an issue. During the pandemic we had issues with attacks on demonstrations. Compared to the years before, you are not really safe in demonstrations as a journalist.”

Jonathan Sachse, Manager, *Correctiv.Lokal*, Germany

Media and responsibility

For media to fulfil their role in democracy, journalists consider themselves at the individual level as *socially responsible*, choosing accountability, trustworthiness, factuality and serving the public interest in the framework of journalistic laws and ethics (see Waisbord 2018; Carlson 2018). As editor Pethő points out, “I think we have to take our job seriously, but I think it’s better not to take ourselves too seriously.”

The interviewees stress the importance of accuracy, using *factchecking*, which further contributes to media trustworthiness and secondarily to the safety of journalists. Furthermore, they emphasise the transparency of what journalists do and how they do it as another element of building trustworthiness. Most of the interviewees at the same time stress the importance of the editor in the editorial process.

“Anyone who applies cowboy journalism gets fired. That’s why we try not to have an opinion on the things we write about, we try to disengage, listen, and hear both sides. And we try to completely move away from opinion journalism, I think we’re supposed to be much more of an observer, putting things in context, rather than a commentator on what’s going on. And the other thing that enhances security is factchecking.”

Pavla Holcová, Investigative journalist, *investigace.cz*, Czech Republic

At the same time, the interviewees are aware of the obstacles and challenges journalists face in terms of responsibility. Those can be summarised as a decline in quality of journalistic work and the violation of expected journalistic rules. Ioana Avădani sums up: “If the journalists don’t do their best, the trust of the people or the respect is going down, which is actually happening here. People are rejecting the media and I think that this is a real problem for democracy.” This theme is linked in the interviewees’ statements on the importance of the editor in the editorial process. They stress they miss a stronger editor’s role or intervention. “If you look at how today’s content is made, you feel that there is no editing. Reporters report from the field, they need an editor to have a broader look,” says Avădani.

Education related to democratic sensibility

Considering education, all interviewees have a journalism degree or degree from a related field. All of them think that training throughout the whole career is essential for journalists. Some of them have even been actively involved in training journalists or teaching journalism at the university.

There are a range of topics and knowledge journalists should acquire and be trained in repeatedly, according to the interviewees: not only writing but also understanding the logical structure of the text; foreign languages; analytical thinking skills; basic economic education; journalistic ethics; software usage. Investigative reporter Holcová considers investigative journalism as “simply journalism + time + money, so I don’t think it requires any super special education”. Nevertheless, some respondents also name specific characteristics and skills that journalists focused on political or investigative journalism should have: patience; discipline; be a good interviewer; understand data; be able to work with documents and open sources; teamwork; be able to handle sometimes uncomfortable situations; be able to think about larger media

topics as projects. Editor Pethő sums it up: “You have to have soul of a gambler and mind of an accountant.” Such a journalist is a good journalist and should have no problem getting a job, according to the respondents. As Holcová puts it, “I don’t think a journalism degree is crucial, but it is useful. The school made me think about some of the important things. The most important subject was ethics. It should be given much more emphasis.”

The interviewees think that learning of journalistic skills can take place in praxis, in specialized training as well as at a university, but none of this is a substitution for lifelong learning. Some of these types of education also have partial shortcomings according to the experience of respondents: obsolescence; unclear boundaries of the field; or lack of emphasis on key topics in the field.

“We have to put a stamp on what is journalism and what is not. We can’t mix public relations and journalism and I don’t like university programmes which combine these fields. Academia has to be more modest. Academics believe that they don’t need to update themselves, but that’s an illusion.”

Paolo Agostinho, Editor, *Lusa News Agency*, Portugal

Thinking about how the media and democracy relation will develop in the future, the interviewees are aware of the current problems in this relationship, connected mainly with *trust in media*, and hope for an improvement.

“I believe in being transparent as journalists with our work. I see it as a good chance to build trust and it is important in the long terms to help democratic structures. If people don’t trust us, they can vote for a politician who will destroy independent media. We have to have in mind, that everything is built on trust. But my general feeling is that we are on a good way to it.”

Jonathan Sachse, Manager, *Correctiv.Lokal*, Germany

Foreign Coverage

Dominik Speck (Erich Brost Institute – TU Dortmund University)

While foreign coverage is a rather classic field of journalism, much older than digitization, it has faced several challenges and shortcomings in recent times. Nevertheless, international reporting – a term often used interchangeably – has not experienced less opportunities and innovations. As the world has arguably become more intertwined yet more complex due to globalization effects, the lines between national and international news blur, challenging long-standing assumptions in both journalism research and practice.

Functions and Characteristics of Foreign Reporting

In the context of transnationalism and globalization, news coverage of international developments and events is of utmost importance. This is a journalistic genre, which is typically termed foreign coverage, foreign reporting, or international reporting. Yet,

“places (whether neighborhoods or countries) are not viewed as isolated units that can only be understood through what happens within them. (...) Understanding a place requires analyzing how its uniqueness is produced through a combination of physical, social, economic, and political attributes—and how those attributes are partially a product of connections to other places, near and far.”

(Flint 2006: 2)

Flint writes about geopolitics, which seem all the more true regarding journalistic coverage of a foreign country, another continent or cross-border issues. This could serve as a basic principle for a contextualized foreign coverage, or as Wu (2019: 1) puts it, a notion of foreign reporting as a news genre that “can potentially yield deeper and wider impact than any other news categories”. Yet, as the following outlines, there is the frequent accusation that foreign coverage is too “domesticated” (i.e. covering each event or development happening abroad through an overly domestic lens) or too conflict-oriented (i.e. over-emphasising negative developments abroad, and more so as with regard to domestic news).

Foreign coverage started to flourish during the heyday of bipolar geopolitical conflict. At the initial stage of the Cold War in the 1950s, Western European and Northern American news media outlets established larger networks of foreign correspondents. Mass communication researchers have followed these developments by assessing the flows and contents of journalism-mediated information about what happens abroad, developing a “geography of foreign news” (e.g. Kamps 1998; Wilke et al. 2012). Galtung and Ruge (1965) claimed that “the more distant an event, the less ambiguous will it have to be” (Galtung – Ruge 1965: 81) when pointing to a significant reduction of complexity in foreign reporting. They selected the degree of negativity in foreign reporting as dependent on a country’s rank in international power viewed from a domestic perspective, i.e., claiming that “the lower the rank of the nation, the more negative will the news from that nation have to be” (Galtung – Ruge 1965: 83).

Two large-scale studies investigated the field of foreign coverage during the 1980s and 1990s and remain to date the biggest analyses in terms of countries covered. The *World of the News Study* covering 29 countries and initiated by the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) and UNESCO (Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. 1985) and the follow-up *Foreign News Study* covering 38 countries (e.g. Hagen et al. 1998; Wu 2000). These studies again demonstrated regional and cultural proximity as a key factor of foreign news flows concomitant with a strong

focus on metropolitan regions and ultimately a lot of attention paid to Western Europe and the US.

Alongside such models of geographical, cultural, or political proximity, research has typically used the *news cycles model* to characterize foreign coverage. The model may explain why certain events abroad, such as the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, frequently receive a lot of international coverage at some (often initial) points, but this attention dwindles after the initial, or repeated, peak of coverage (Fengler et al. 2020). Research also emphasises the importance of the interests of the domestic country in foreign reporting (e.g., Heimprecht 2017). We may also consider factors such as the degree of economic exchange with a country in the news as a decisive factor of whether or not that country receives coverage (Wu 2000; Scherer et al. 2006).

Kamps (2008) points out newsrooms tend to “domesticate” foreign news, by embedding these in national contexts to reduce complexity (see also Alasuutari et al. 2013). Similarly, Sreberny-Mohammadi et al. (1985: 38) have provided a framework of three *types of foreign news coverage* classified alongside their connection to domestic issues: (1) *Foreign news abroad*: News about an event (or developments) in another country (e. g. the military coup in Myanmar). (2) *Home news abroad*: News about an event taking place in another country, but which are closely connected to the domestic country (e.g. an intervention of the Nordic ambassadors in Myanmar against the coup) (3) *Foreign news at home*: News which “play” in the domestic country, but are closely connected to the foreign country (e.g. the Burmese diaspora in the UK protesting against the coup).

While this framework has proven useful to demonstrate that a substantial part of foreign coverage is, one way or another, closely connected to and influenced by domestic issues (see also Kamps 2008), it may though fall short of capturing the complexities of cross-country flows and backflows of information in the “age of glocalization” (Belamghari 2020), as well as pertinent increasing importance of supranational, multinational, and transnational actors. Scholars such as Berglez (2008) or Livingston

and Asmolov (2010) thus rightly point out the need to move beyond a simple domestic-foreign dichotomy and call for a “global journalism”. While several studies have found evidence of an increasingly “global” journalism, others demonstrate that national provincialism or domestic / foreign categories remain firmly embedded in news reporting (Van Leuven – Berglez 2016). Research also challenges the importance of (geographical, cultural or political) proximity for foreign reporting and instead highlights the importance of opportunities to “domesticate” a news story, e.g., because of the involvement of a domestic country in the reported conflict or conflict solution efforts (Fengler et al. 2020; see also Heimprecht 2017).

Criticisms of Foreign Reporting: Negativity Bias and Stereotypes

The MacBride Report of 1980 investigated the shortcomings of foreign reporting. Following the nonelite nations’ call for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), UNESCO commissioned the report (Wu 2019: 3), which criticized the dominance of the Global North in the worldwide flow of information as well as an overemphasis on crises and catastrophes (UNESCO 1980). Scholars such as Serwornoo (2021) point to the feedback effects between (dominant) foreign coverage about a country or region and coverage about domestic issues by domestic media, claiming that the image of Africa in the Ghanaian press is decisively shaped by the impact of foreign news organisations. This reflects previous findings on a “dominance of Western correspondents and news agencies such as Associated Press, Agence France Presse, and Reuters in this news category in the twentieth century” (Wu 2019: 2).

Research typically characterizes international reporting, even more than domestic news, as elite-centric and focused on politics as the main dimension (e.g. Hafez 2002). Nevertheless, recent studies challenge this finding and observe a shift towards including non-elite actors (e.g. Kampf – Liebes 2013; Roman et al. 2017; Fengler et al.

2020). Likewise, journalists covering international affairs have often been accused of following the foreign policy lines of their respective national governments (Hafez – Grüne 2015) in a “rally round the flag”-effect. There is a perception of foreign coverage is biased towards war, crime, crisis, natural disasters, or diseases (e. g. Mikich 2003; Breckl 2006) or, more bluntly, as a “spectatorship of suffering” (Chouliaraki 2006). This critique has arguably been raised most prominently regarding Western media coverage of Africa (e. g. Mücke 2009; see also Nothias 2015: 2018).

Furthermore, scholars describe foreign reporting as stereotyped (Nitz 2008), instigating friend and enemy dichotomies, exoticism, and, ultimately racism (see also Nothias 2018) instead of facilitating intercultural communication as a “dialogic journalism” (Kleinstauber 2003). Further research on foreign reporting could take on a more actor-centred approach unveiling the networks “of humans, technologies and places” (Archetti 2014: 593). In general, studies on foreign reporting have mostly focused on the perspective of professionals – i.e. journalists – or the content of coverage. As in other fields of journalism research, research rarely focus on the perceptions of this coverage by recipients (for an exception see Lee et al. 2017.)

Structures of Foreign Reporting

In general, scholars have well-researched the structures and functioning of foreign coverage in Western Europe and Northern America (e. g. Hahn et al. 2008; Gross – Kopper 2011; Terzis 2015a). The same cannot be said for media in most Central and Eastern European States, arguably due to the limited capability of newsrooms and the lack of training to maintain well-developed networks of foreign reporting in less affluent media markets (Fengler et al. 2020). Although, Terzis (2015a) did find valuable country studies for several Central and Eastern European countries. Studies typically focus on either or both the work routines of foreign correspondents and demographic

patterns of this part of the journalistic workforce (Willnat – Martin 2012: 499); some also focus on their self-perception (e. g. Levine – Posdizich 2014). Scholars often describe foreign reporters as having higher education than the average journalist (e.g. Wagner 2001; Wu 2019), as well as requiring special training.

Research has yet pointed to economic shortcomings such as the expenditure of scarce resources for foreign reporting along with the necessity to “subsidize” the underlying cost structures with revenue from other parts of the company. This leads to a decrease of foreign reporting and the closure of news bureaus abroad in the wake of the newspaper crisis since the 2000s (e.g. Altmeppen 2010; Willnat – Martin 2012). This has resulted in increasing ad-hoc foreign journalism through “special envoys” or “parachutist” reporters being deployed to the places of interest at a certain point of time, following news cycles (e.g. Erickson – Hamilton 2006). According to Terzis (2015b: 298), foreign correspondents in Europe increasingly are freelancers working for multiple media platforms and outlets rather than as permanent employees of a single organisation.

While these trends have rightly met criticism (e.g. Otto – Meyer 2012; Murrell 2019), as they may lead to a less “sustainable” or even less informed coverage, it is also fair to say that cheaper travel opportunities as well as mobile and internet communication have facilitated “new” forms of foreign reporting beyond the (expensive) “stationing” of foreign correspondents abroad (Willnat – Martin 2012; see also Hamilton – Jenner 2004). Permanent foreign correspondents often cover a vast area consisting of rather diverse states and languages, especially in those regions which are rarely in the main focus of news coverage. As a result, they may hardly acquire all relevant language and (inter-)cultural skills necessary to really capture all developments within that region (see also Hafez – Grüne 2015).

Both permanent correspondents and “parachutists” often rely on local colleagues, the “fixers” and “stringers”, for newsgathering. Recent literature spotlights the importance of these local aides for the systems of foreign reporting, and the inequalities between

them and international journalists (e.g. Murrell 2010; Plaut – Klein 2019; Mitra – Paterson 2021). Lastly, research has also stated the tendency of foreign reporting to become “virtual”, i.e. by in-house reporters covering events abroad facilitated through the Internet (Hahn – Lönnendonker 2005; Willnat – Martin 2012). While we may typically think of foreign reporting as being conducted in a news bureau abroad, the field has become much broader – with “parachutists”, highly specialized reporters focusing on “global” issues such as climate change, as well as local journalists or fixers working for international outlets (see Hamilton – Jenner 2004). Finally, we can observe the growing importance of information (or footage) provided by citizens (or citizen journalists) through social media or other networked channels (e.g. Heinrich 2012), which in turn also raises question of verifiability of this content in international coverage (Wu 2019: 4; see also Murrell 2018).

Cross-Border Collaborative or Transnational Journalism

Throughout the past decade, collaboration has become a leitmotif for innovations in journalism. While these collaborations may include (institutionalized or non-institutionalized) partnerships between newsrooms and users or between newsrooms and civil society organisations, journalistic collaboration across borders has also become increasingly relevant (e.g. Alfter 2019; Heft 2021). While the content produced through such collaborations may not inevitably be regarded as “foreign reporting” in the first place, it may reflect the characteristics of *global journalism* as mentioned above. Such collaborations, e.g. the Panama Papers or Paradise Papers investigations (Gearing – Berglez 2019), have undoubtedly “interconnected the local with the global” (Van Leuven – Berglez 2016: 667).

Cross-border practices could be termed as “transnational” as they involve “journalists working collaboratively and simultaneously in two or more countries”

(Gearing – Berglez 2019: 212), thus transcending classic “international” or “foreign news reporting”. As collaborative cross-border journalism “calls out media bias” (Grzeszyk 2019) it may also serve as a starting point for improving intercultural communication and develop a more “dialogic journalism” (Kleinsteuber 2003). A recent survey among members of Hostwriter and participants of Dataharvest - the European Investigative Journalism Conference (Dataharvest - the EIJC) has demonstrated a lack of specific training opportunities for such collaborative cross-border journalism (Heft 2020: 6; see also Part 1 of this book). Further research could thus elaborate on the needs and necessities of such training opportunities; along with investigating the effects of cross-border collaboration on “traditional” foreign news coverage.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Our interview sample consisted of six journalists (one each from Germany, Portugal, Hungary, and the Czech Republic and two from Romania). We tried to represent a variety of roles in foreign coverage. However, our sample does not include any active correspondent permanently stationed abroad. Five respondents represent rather “classic” roles in foreign reporting, including a former Washington correspondent who now works as Deputy Head of News, alongside four journalists who rather fulfil the job profiles of “special envoys” sent to areas of interest for short-term assignments. They have been covering a variety of events in many countries and contexts from war and conflict to major elections and international political events. Harald Schumann, an investigative journalist and co-founder of the cross-border network Investigate Europe²⁷ complimented the sample to represent the collaborative branch

²⁷ A team of journalists from 11 European countries. The network had been established in 2016. The network jointly researches investigative stories, which are subsequently published in national media in the respective countries.

of international reporting. Our aim was to identify current challenges and trends in international reporting as well as potential shifts in its structures, together with desiderata for journalism training and education.

Trends and Challenges in Contemporary Foreign Reporting

Asked about major challenges in foreign reporting, our interviewees mention technological developments, but also shrinking budgets for both permanent correspondents and international reporters being sent abroad from time to time. Some also perceive low levels of interest in international issues for both audiences and editors.

“The main challenge is the public’s increasing lack of interest for anything perceived as too far away to have a direct impact. This is connected to the editorial tendency to allocate, at least in Romania, less broadcasting time or slots for foreign affairs.”

Carmen Gavrilă, Foreign Affairs Correspondent, *Radio România*

Another challenge, according to some respondents, is the lack of in-depth reporting on foreign affairs. András Földes, a video journalist at the news website *Telex.hu*, is critical of Hungarian newsrooms that “usually translate articles from international media” when covering foreign issues. In addition, limited budgets hinder journalists to travel more frequently, rather reporting international developments from their desks.

“(…) International news usually comes without clear background information, in order for the public to really understand the context or the importance of a certain event. In the Romanian media there is also the same set of international affairs experts that give

opinions on anything and everything, whether they really know the area in question or not, for example, the same experts on Russia offer analysis on Africa or the Middle East.”

Carmen Gavrilă, Foreign Affairs Correspondent, *Radio România*

Ricardo Alexandre, Deputy Director and Foreign Affairs Editor at Portugal’s private radio station *TSF*, identifies technological changes, alongside shrinking budgets, as reasons why international reporters may travel less than before, since it is “easier to talk to anyone on the other side of the world” nowadays. Carmen Gavrilă thinks that “international coverage is increasingly biased and lacking the bigger picture and the background necessary to create that bigger picture.”

Harald Schumann (co-Founder of Investigate Europe) also points to national bias as a key challenge in reporting foreign affairs. This perception of bias was his main motivation to initiate the collaborative network Investigate Europe. When shooting a TV documentary about the European countries most affected by the so-called Euro crisis, he “found out that nearly all the information I was looking for, also the very critical, sensitive issues, had already been published. But only in the national media. It has never left the national realm.” According to him, editors “usually buy the perspective of the national governments”. This leads to a coverage with narrow perspectives even within EU countries, as Schumann explains “even those correspondents who know better have no chance than to confirm those prejudices because their editors really don’t want to read anything else.”

“I will never forget this situation when I was in Ireland with the TV team, and there was a small village which was in permanent resistance against the bailout of the private Irish banks. (...) I interviewed an old lady, at least 70, maybe even 75. (...) And then I asked her: Why do you do these demonstrations here? The Germans think that we have rescued you from going bust! So, what do you protest against? And then she looked at

me as if I were crazy. You saved us? No: It was the other way round. We saved you! If we would not have bailed out our banks, the contagion would have destroyed all the European financial system. (...) And for me, it was the moment it ticked in my head: Wow! This is really a complete failure of the media.”

Harald Schumann, Editor, *Der Tagesspiegel*, and Co-Founder of Investigate Europe

Schumann sees this way of reporting as something “they [the media] didn’t do (...) on purpose, it’s no conspiracy.” Rather, he suggests that this stems from an “outdated system” of foreign coverage generating “narrow-minded, national perspective journalism.” While critical of the role foreign correspondents play within this system, Schumann is “not strictly against” sending such permanent envoys abroad: “But to have the correspondents as the only source you know in these other countries while you decide about a headline and a major message, this is really bad journalism.” Rather, he states the importance of working together with local journalists, which could be done without any further funding.

Ricardo Alexandre from Portuguese radio station *TSF* predicts that while there might be even fewer permanent employees reporting from abroad in the future, there will still be enough freelance foreign correspondents working for various media outlets. Such freelancers are also much cheaper for media outlets than basing a permanent employee abroad. Alexandre, being responsible for the foreign correspondent network at *TSF*, is also aware of a trend that freelance correspondents are only part-time journalists as they make their living from a different job. Furthermore, he identifies a tendency to build networks of non-journalist contributors, such as researchers working abroad. All in all, our interviewees do see foreign correspondents as a still crucial element within the structures of international reporting, but point towards limited resources for upholding large networks.

Most of the respondents have worked with fixers during their assignments abroad. András Földes (*Telex.hu*) and Carmen Gavrilă (*Radio România*) argue the importance on

working with local aides in war and conflict zones, as they have a better oversight of the situation or know how to deal with local bureaucracy. However, both interviewees suggest that it is crucial to bear in mind that fixers may be biased, or even monitoring the activities of international reporters on behalf of the local authorities. Carmen Gavrilă recommends combining the knowledge of fixers with other sources such as citizens or local activists. Gavrilă suggests the “best scenario is the one in which the journalist doesn’t need translation.” The interviewees mention technological changes as both a challenge and asset for international reporting: While it is easier to report on developments abroad, the accelerated speed of international news dissemination brings disadvantages. Stressing the advantages of being able to broadcast from literally everywhere with minimal equipment, Martin Řezníček (Foreign News Editor and former US correspondent, *Česká televize*) though thinks that international TV news increasingly focus on live reporting rather than on news packages, i.e. pre-recorded stories with more in-depth information.

From the perspective of our interviewees, a lack of funding is clearly a major obstacle for further innovations in international reporting. This relates to the capability of newsrooms to send journalists abroad, but also to their capacity to collaborate with colleagues abroad. “So, funding is the major reason why there are not much more [cross-border collaborative] teams. Otherwise, I am quite sure, there would be hundreds of them”, Harald Schumann says. This is even more important, as many of our interviewees perceive a blurring of boundaries between “foreign” and “domestic” issues. Looking into the future, Martin Řezníček suggests that “you shouldn’t have a separate international desk, domestic desk and so on. Because I think you will only have one desk and one world.” Talking about the situation in Romania, Carmen Gavrilă mentions a “penury of seasoned and experienced journalists in the field of foreign affairs”, thinking that focusing on domestic affairs is “a better medium for advancement in a journalistic career.” Thus, anchoring international issues in journalism education is crucial.

International Reporting and Journalism Education

Our interviewees – even those who studied journalism or mass communication – generally say they acquired their international reporting skills mostly on the job and through self-preparation, rather than at university or in specialized further education courses offered by their employers. Even those who frequently cover war and conflict zones report rather few training opportunities preparing them for these potentially dangerous situations. However, some of the respondents have an educational background which relates to international reporting, such as Martin Řezníček (who majored in International Studies besides Mass Communication) and Carmen Gavrilă (who majored in Foreign Languages/Farsi and English-American Studies).

Overall, the respondents diagnose a tendency to neglect international issues in the respective national curricula of journalism education. At the same time, the interviewees agree that reporting skills for domestic and international issues are rather interchangeable, as “there is only one kind of journalism”, as András Földes puts it: “The only difference that I could name is using a fixer”. Consequently, students who want to become foreign reporters do not need, according to our interviewees, fundamentally different practical training than their peers eager to work in other fields. “Finding sources is pretty much no different from the procedures used in covering domestic affairs, including fact-checking”, Carmen Gavrilă says. Most respondents though consider an in-depth background knowledge on international issues and language skills as key assets for young professionals pursuing a career in international reporting. According to Harald Schumann, journalists “are not educated to report in a European perspective”, lacking basic knowledge on how the European Union and its major institutions work, despite the high degree of European integration.

In the context of potential topics to be included in university-level courses on international reporting, Martin Řezníček suggests that theoretical knowledge of international issues should be combined with practical elements. He proposes an

exchange model between universities, collaborating on joint courses on foreign reporting. In the context of the coverage of war and conflict, Carmen Gavrilă recommends specialized survival training. Ricardo Alexandre mentions geopolitics as another important issue to be covered, as well as ethical and psychological aspects of reporting from war and conflict zones:

“When you are there [in a war or conflict zone], you have some better conditions than most of the people you are reporting about. (...) You are in a security compound or in a hotel protected by guards or whatever, or in a residential area that is more protected to this or that, while most of the people are more vulnerable to what may happen to them. And more important than all that, you have a plane ticket to fly back. (...) It's your obligation to treat the people you are reporting about with more dignity. (...) You must be aware that you are running to places where everyone wants to run away from.”

Ricardo Alexandre, Deputy Director and Foreign Affairs Editor, *TSF*

According to Harald Schumann, classes aiming to establish a cross-border collaborative mindset should focus on how to tackle national bias, alongside the imperative of giving voice to local sources:

“A basic issue you learn when you go to journalism school is: You have to give the other side a right to comment. You have to talk to all sides in order to get as near as possible to an objective assessment. Applying the same rule for international stories, you have to have good contacts in whatever other country you report about, you have to talk to natives so that you have their perspectives. And better more, two or three, not only one. (...)”

Harald Schumann, Editor, *Der Tagesspiegel*, Co-Founder, Investigate Europe

Asked about the skills and competences young professionals should have to enter the field, Carmen Gavrilă mentions the willingness to comprehensively update “one’s knowledge of international affairs issues that are central to and characteristic for the world regions that the professional is specialized in”. Apart from language skills and despite the oft analysed trend of parachute journalism, specialization for a certain country or world region still seems to be an important recruiting reason.

In summary, journalism training focusing on international reporting should adapt to the current diversity of the field. Considering the increasingly “networked” character of international reporting, journalism teachers need to consider the skills and knowledge necessary to collaborate with colleagues from abroad as sources, experts, “fixers”, contributors, or just partners in joint journalistic investigations. An in-depth knowledge on bias and stereotypes, international relations and geopolitics is also crucial to prepare journalists for reporting foreign issues from abroad.

Covering Migration

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While we have called this field “covering migration” to simplify its title, it is important to distinguish between migrants and refugees. As we focus on both aspects of migration, we will rather use the term “covering migration and forced displacement” (for an overview of the different definitions and terminologies, see Lengauer 2021).²⁸

Why covering migration and forced displacement matters

In 2020, over 280 million people globally were migrants and refugees, an increase of almost 130 million since 1990 (Migration Data Portal 2021). The number and proportion of these flows already surpasses some projections made for the year 2050, which were in the order of 230 million (IOM 2019: 2). Journalists can, with the ways they report about matters of migration, shape the perception of migrants and refugees in countries of both origin and destination. But even if media do not, or only hesitantly, cover the topic, this may have an impact on audiences and decision-makers. Citizens may not understand the full consequences of migration matters for their own society, do or do not exert pressure on policymakers to take action, or feel betrayed by media. Media scholars even argue that the high visibility of the so-called European “refugee

²⁸ Parts of this text have been taken from previous publications of the author: Fengler et al. (2020) and Fengler (2021).

crisis” of 2015 in the media has promoted Euroscepticism among European citizens (Harteveld et al. 2018). A migrant from Kenya, interviewed for one of our research projects, notes that the Kakuma refugee camp, accommodating over 180,000 refugees and asylum seekers, is simply “a forgotten story” in the Kenyan media (Bastian et al. 2018).

To enable a more “independent, objective and quality reporting of media outlets” on migrants and refugees (UN 2018), we need to study the status quo of migration coverage and identify achievements as well as shortcomings in the way media may treat the topic. As a global issue, it is important to not only look at the coverage in those countries that receive the biggest flows of migrants but also take into account the countries of origin and transit countries. In line with the previous research conducted by Erich Brost Institute for International Journalism (EBI), this chapter will mainly focus on migration from sub-Saharan African countries to Europe as an exemplary field.²⁹ Research has shown that media in both world regions tend to focus on events such as the accidents of refugee boats in the Mediterranean Sea, while neglecting the complex causes leading to migration flows (Fengler et al. 2020).

Covering migration and forced displacement in Europe and Africa: An overview

Various phases of migration have triggered mass communication studies on the coverage of migration, while reporting on minorities (sometimes related to the issue) has been a recurrent subject of analysis at least since the 1980s. The studies provide a base to assess the development and status quo of migration coverage across countries, seeking to understand “the factors that shape media coverage of migrants and

²⁹ For an overview of aspects of migration coverage in other world regions, see Fengler and Lengauer (2021).

minorities, as well as the effect of that coverage on public attitudes, policy outcomes or social relations” (Bleich et al. 2015: 857). It is notable that most of these studies have originated in the Global North. While the causes and consequences of migrants’ and refugees’ movements have steadily dominated the media agenda in “Western” societies since 2015 (Krüger – Zapf-Schramm 2016; Fengler – Kreutler 2020), few stories and headlines in African media focus on people leaving the continent and heading north (Chinje 2016). Research on the coverage of migrants and refugees in African countries is largely restricted to South Africa, which has experienced recurring incidents targeting migrants from other African countries. Authors analysing the South African print media include Danso and McDonald (2001), McDonald and Jacobs (2005), and Fine and Bird (2002), who argue that South African media in recent years provided an “incomplete” and “simplistic” picture of xenophobic incidents (Smith 2009: 11). In *Moving Stories*, White (2015) argues that journalists fail to tell the full story and routinely fall into propaganda traps laid by politicians. In migrants’ and refugees’ countries of origin, censorship or a lack of resources, or a combination of both, are mainly to blame for poor coverage (see also Al-Mazahara 2016).

Also, most of the studies analyse coverage of migration, (im)migrants and refugees in a single country, although “this policy domain is increasingly shifting to supranational decision making within the EU, which means that analysing immigration-related public debate from a Europeanised perspective becomes increasingly relevant” (Horsti, 2008: 42). Yet, as Meltzser et al. (2018: 1) summarise in a meta-analysis, “there is little comparative research on the salience of immigration-related issues or actors in the media across different European countries”. These studies show considerable variation in line with different political positions towards migration within European countries, but also with various journalistic routines, media cultures, and access to sources for migration coverage. Caviedes (2015: 898) has compared migration coverage in France, the UK and Italy, based on the observation that a large proportion of migration coverage is “increasingly linked with crime and secu-

rity issues”. Migration is also associated with “threatening economic prosperity and cultural identity”. According to Esses et al. (2013: 520), negative frames and conflicts continue to characterize European coverage of migrants and refugees. Intra-EU migrants are more often described by the media as a “threat to the economy and welfare system”, while non-EU migrants are portrayed as a “threat” to host countries’ culture (Meltzer et al. 2018: 6). A recent study in seven EU countries confirms that migration from outside the EU into the EU is framed more negatively and tends to focus on matters of securitization (Eberl et al. 2019).

Focusing on the so-called “European refugee crisis” of 2015, Berry et al. (2015) found that coverage of migrants and refugees differed significantly among European countries. Humanitarian issues were more prevalent in Italian media; Swedish publications had the most positive tenor; those in the UK remained largely negative. According to an analysis by the European Journalism Observatory (EJO), newspapers in Western Europe were generally more compassionate towards the plight of migrants and refugees, compared to Central and Eastern European countries (EJO 2015). Georgiou and Zaborowski (2017) conducted a research project on media coverage in eight European countries, concluding that the media paid little and scattered attention to the context of the migrants and refugees in Europe, and stories were only rarely connected to war reporting or other international news stories from the countries of origins of migrants and refugees. Coverage tends to emphasise the consequences and effects of immigration from the viewpoint of economics and labour markets (Goedeke Tort et al. 2016). Moreover, studies do identify a lack of reporting about migrants’ individual stories (Georgiou – Zaborowski 2017). A study by the ICMPD (2017) points towards a lack of knowledge concerning the complex issue of migration among journalists in European and MENA countries and also about migrants’ countries of origin. The same study also highlighted newsrooms’ vulnerability to pressure by populists and via social media, potentially demonstrating a need for further education and training (ICMPD 2017).

While research has typically focused on the *content* of migration coverage, much less is known about the *actors* in this field: Journalists covering migration have not attracted a high degree of scholarly attention so far, despite the potential hardships of doing so (see Fronista – Papadopoulou 2018; Zappe 2021). Further research could thus focus on migration coverage from a journalist-centred angle, assessing the specific (training) needs of the field.

There are also studies focusing on the impact of migration coverage on the *audience*. Focusing on the connection of media use and voting behaviour in the Czech Republic, research by Štětka et al. (2020) indicates that exposure to news about migration increases the likelihood to vote for populist parties. Sohlberg et al. (2018) indicate that the picture of the young Alan Shenu (often reported as “Aylan Kurdi”) who was found drowned on a beach in Turkey in 2015 made public opinion more welcoming of refugees. A cross-country study showed that in Portugal, the UK, Germany, and Italy positive humanitarian stories about migrants and refugees increased three-fold immediately after the photographs of the child were published (EJO 2015).

Taking a closer look at the challenges: Two exemplary studies

To analyse migration coverage across political systems and journalism cultures, the Erich Brost Institute (EBI) and its international partners have conducted two studies comparing the coverage of migrants and refugees in Africa and Europe (study 1) as well as across Western and Eastern Europe, the United States, and Russia (study 2).

The first study compared newspaper content in six European and five African countries (Fengler et al. 2018; 2020). A consortium of European and African universities analysed articles related to migration and forced displacement published in the online editions of two leading daily newspapers each from Germany, the UK, France, Italy, Greece, and Spain, as well as Kenya, Uganda Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Ghana. The

findings demonstrate a huge gap regarding the quantity of migration coverage between African and European media. More than 88% of the articles found during the study period came from European media, with African media amounting to only 12% of the articles. This is a striking imbalance, even when considering that African newspapers on average have less space for news compared to European newspapers, and radio is the dominant medium due to financial and technological restrictions as well as a lack of literacy (African Media Barometer 2018).

Coverage in both Europe and Africa was dominated by day-to-day politics, and severely lacks deeper insights. Less than 9% of the total coverage is devoted to relevant background information, which would help the audience to understand the actual causes and impact of migration and forced displacement. In Europe, coverage of migration from Africa was heavily self-centred and revolved around European security issues. Only a quarter (26%) of the articles by European media focused on African main actors. At the same time, the European media largely ignored the sub-Saharan African countries of origin. Little was said about who African migrants and refugees are and why they decide to leave. Strikingly, African media paid even less attention to those topics, instead, accidents and disasters in the Mediterranean Sea dominated their coverage. Migration coverage in African countries neglected the people: it was focused on authorities and lacked a human face. The content analysis's findings were triangulated with qualitative panel discussions with African migrants in Germany (Zappe et al. 2020).

A second multi-country study compared migration coverage in 17 countries in Western and Eastern Europe, the United States, and Russia (Fengler – Kreutler 2020). Significant differences in the intensity of reporting about migration and forced displacement across countries were evident. Coverage in Germany and Hungary – the two countries with highest numbers of first-time asylum applicants in 2015 – stood out in terms of volume. In other European media, the topic received much less attention. Also, many European media treated matters of migrants and refugees as a

“foreign topic”, taking place far away from users’ own country. A focus on migration as a domestic topic was only apparent in Italy, Germany, and Greece. French and British media see their country involved on an international scale, as well as the Hungarian media – the latter certainly a consequence of the political focus placed by the country’s government on alleged dangers and burdens of migration. In the Italian press, and partly in the French media, immigrants from Africa dominated the media coverage; other countries in Europe focused on migrants and refugees from the Near and Middle East; potentially reflecting the main flows of migration to these countries.

Strikingly, it often seems to be impossible for the journalists to differentiate between refugees with their respective rights under the Geneva Convention and other migrants. Journalists may also be unfamiliar with the definitions themselves, as most of the articles (60%) mention a mix of various status groups, or the status question remains unclear – underlining the need for more specific training on the topic.

Western European and left-leaning or liberal media focus more on the situation of, and aid for, migrants and refugees, while Central and Eastern European and more right-wing or conservative media focus on problems and protests.³⁰ Yet, in almost all countries, audiences do have a choice, as the two leading media studied offered contrasting perspectives on the topic. The analysis of the main actors underlines the policy focus in migration reporting: In 37% of the articles the government, or a single actor of the government or ruling party, was the main actor. Migrants represented a total of 26.6% of main actors, but are more often portrayed as large, anonymous groups rather than as individuals or small groups such as families.

³⁰ The media outlets covered in the different countries were ranked as liberal or conservative according to an assessment of country experts involved (Fengler – Kreutler 2020: 12-14).

Outlook: Migration and transnational news flows

The analysis of migration coverage needs to be embedded in the discussion about news flows and foreign coverage in both the Global South and North, as well as a rather biased portrayal of Africa in international news (see previous chapter). Given the deficits in global news flows, reporting about Africa remains a specific challenge. Serwornoo (2021) demonstrates that Ghanaian media rely on sources from the Global North even for the coverage of neighbouring African countries. Political and economic problems that trigger the causes of migration remain rather invisible in the African media. In this regard, we may argue that covering migration and forced displacement is well-suited for cross-border collaborative journalism (see previous chapter), as “the true story of migration and forced displacement can only be told from more than one place. With a shrinking network of foreign correspondents even in the ‘Western’ media, and extremely scarce resources in many newsrooms to report even from neighbouring countries, collaborative projects may emerge as one viable solution to contextualize the coverage” (Bettels-Schwabbauer – Leihns 2021).

INTERVIEW RESULTS

To get an additional impression of the field, we interviewed four journalists (one each from the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, and Portugal). We focused predominantly on migration coverage in contexts abroad – i.e., as a part of international reporting. Yet, one of our respondents, Eszter Neuberger (*444.hu*, Hungary) also frequently writes about topics of social inequality, integration, and minorities within her home country. While none of the respondents is stationed abroad permanently, all have experience from various research trips on issues of migration from regions such as the Mediterranean, the Middle East, Sub-Saharan Africa, or the Balkans. The interviews

aimed at getting further insights into the challenges journalists covering migration and forced displacement face, and to analyse their expectations towards journalism training and education.

Challenges and limitations in reporting migration and forced displacement

Asked whether they feel the mass media properly present migration and forced displacement issues, the interviewees point towards rather cyclical attention, which comes across mainly in times of perceived crisis, with peaks such as during Europe's "refugee crisis" of 2015. This correlates with previous findings from academic research that migration and forced displacement is covered mainly within the context of crises.

"In 2015 and 2016, when everybody was paying attention to this subject, we had a lot of good reporting on this subject. (...) But there are no conditions at most of the newsrooms to have a journalist that is paying attention to this with the frequency that we should have. Because it is a phenomenon that will not stop."

Catarina Santos, Editor, *Observador*

As found in the literature, some of our interviewees criticize a rather elite-centred reporting about migration and forced displacement, which often excludes the voices of migrants and refugees or other "ordinary" citizens. According to Eszter Neuberger, this also depends on "whether you have the time and resources to go to talk to people and not just work on the press releases of NGOs that are involved in integration, or advocacy for human rights." Tomáš Lindner says that he is not talking too much with politicians while reporting on this topic:

“I think that one of the major problems of the 2015 media landscape in the Czech Republic was that too much voice was given to politicians. And those politicians, who often didn’t understand anything about the topic, and suddenly they had to tell their opinions about the refugees and the EU quota system, and they totally dominated in the debate. And experts, lots of other voices that could be heard were not really audible in most reporting here.”

Tomáš Lindner, Editor, *Respekt*

However, such in-depth reporting requires adequate funding, a resource which seems to be comparatively scarce when it comes to the realisation of field trips, making cross-funding from outside the newsroom budgets indispensable. The interviewees mention travel grants from NGOs or foundations, journalism awards funding the next research journey, organised press trips or even the extension of private holidays for research purposes as means to make such reporting possible despite limited budgets. However, research trips sponsored by organisations (be they NGOs or major international intergovernmental organisations) appear as a double-edged sword: Both Tomáš Lindner (*Respekt*, Czech Republic) and Julia Amberger (freelance journalist, Germany) stress that when participating in such trips, it is advisable to stay longer than the official trip duration, to get a more diverse and in-depth picture.

At any rate, such organisations do play an important role in reporting migration and forced displacement. This may not come as a surprise given their crucial position as actors in the field. They also serve as agenda-setters, sources, and door-openers, help journalists to getting in touch with migrants and refugees or granting access to sites of interest. Again, this is perceived as ambivalent, as Catarina Santos describes based on an experience during a field trip:

“But there was a particular episode, something very symbolic, that speaks a lot about this very tricky relationship on the ground. I had to go to a neighbourhood that was

being supported by a major international organisation. They provided me with two translators from their own staff. (...) On the ground I had the feeling that not everything was being translated, but I had no way to really check it there. But one thing that I always did when I came back from these trips was to contract my own translator (...) I realized with my translator that a lot of things were being said there that weren't that good for the organisation."

Catarina Santos, Editor, *Observador*

While many newsrooms cannot afford to hire own translators for such field trips, these double-checks when returning home are crucial, according to Catarina Santos. Eszter Neuberger (*444.hu*, Hungary), sees NGOs as important partners, but also stresses the ambiguity of the relationship. Julia Amberger, a German freelance journalist specialized in, amongst others, migration and forced displacement with a focus on African countries, avoids working with organisations when possible, except for when reporting from war and conflict zones. She did investigate a story on corruption within a resettlement programme of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, in East Africa and has cooperated with local journalists on several occasions and considers such collaborations as door-openers.

Our interviewees mention role conflicts that might arise when reporting about migration and forced displacement, challenging the role of journalists as neutral observers, such as being asked for money from the people you report about. While these situations might be typical of any reporting on people in need, it is crucial to consider these situations during training, as it may break with textbook standards of what a reporter should and should not do. Talking about experiences of a colleague of his on the so-called Balkan Route, Tomáš Lindner describes ethical challenges:

"You see thirsty people, so you just give them some water. Although you should be maybe only in an observer role. But this is simply a certain basic humanity. This type of

help. But another thing would be to take the refugees into your car and travel with them to Czech Republic, which I believe is clearly beyond your role as a journalist. You could also discredit yourself and your profession in the eyes of readers.”

Tomáš Lindner, Editor, *Respekt*

Catarina Santos recommends journalists to be transparent about their role just from the beginning of an interview with a migrant or refugee, to immediately respond to any hopes and expectations they might have in terms of getting help. Also, Julia Amberger suggests making clear which kind of support she as a journalist could offer, if any at all: “I can draw attention to your case, but I can’t solve it.”

Typical to many other on-the-ground situations in journalism, several interviewees point out the difficulties in verifying what migrants and refugees tell them, as especially the latter often left their home countries with literally no documents. “Sometimes the story is very powerful, but you just don’t know if it’s true or not. You have no way to double-check it”, Tomáš Lindner says. In such cases he recommends being transparent about this, including the doubt in your story. In general, our interviewees plead for a contextualized reporting on migrants and refugees, moving beyond a merely statistical approach in this highly sensitive area:

“By that time all the world was just paying a lot of attention to migration (...). Numbers, numbers, and numbers of people arriving, the amount of people. And I thought that, okay, what I have to do here now with the material I have is the opposite of what we have every day: I have to focus on the stories. I think we are numbing somehow because we are giving them so much numbers every day.”

Catarina Santos, Editor, *Observador*

Reporting migration and forced displacement: Educating skilful journalists

Asked whether they, at any point in their career, received specific training related to reporting migration and forced displacement, all the interviewees claim not to have, although three of them did study journalism or mass communication. However, Eszter Neuberger and Catarina Santos mention ethics classes during their time at university as a useful preparation for their later work. Yet, all of them say they acquired the necessary skills on the job and point to the difficulties in proper preparation for challenging situations in this specific area of coverage within a classroom.

“As a journalist, I think you have to learn to try to do a very difficult balance between keeping your ability to have empathy, because without empathy, you just cannot do these kinds of stories. But at the same time, remaining focused on what you are doing there, what is your mission, that you are a journalist, and that you have to keep this in mind all the time. (...) And it’s very difficult to give advice to someone who has no experience on dealing with these things. Because the thing you realize is, you get this as you go. No one can really teach you how to get this.”

Catarina Santos, Editor, *Observador*

Tomáš Lindner mentions a “big limitation” when covering the issue abroad: that journalists often are not based in the foreign countries they report about, just visiting them for only one or two weeks or even days. Lindner believes young professional should thus “take all opportunities to travel”, even if it is not as a journalist. Good preparation is another way to tackle the challenge of not being on the ground permanently. He recommends reading a variety of sources about a particular country or topic before a reporting trip. Also, Catarina Santos stresses that “you cannot understand a situation if you are just passing by for two or three days”, pointing towards the necessity of good

preparation and constant follow-ups. While the interviewees suggest that a lot of the skills necessary to report migration and forced displacement come just from working on the ground, they point out a variety of content they deem useful for curricula. Both Eszter Neuberger and Catarina Santos emphasise the importance of correct terminology, such as the distinction between migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. Catarina Santos concludes that such training would benefit even those journalists who are not actually experts in the field.

Julia Amberger believes that taking a closer look at countries and how they are affected by migration and forced displacement would help in understanding the complexity of the issue: “The reasons for which people leave, and how different countries cope with the situation, vary significantly”. Eszter Neuberger also suggests including some information on prejudice and cultural sensitivity, such as culture-oriented notions of relationships between men and women, which reporters might face when working in the field. She says it is also relevant to discuss prejudice a reporter might have herself. Julia Amberger recommends including ethical and legal aspects of covering migration and forced displacement, along with focusing on the traumas migrants and refugees might face: She suggests inviting a psychologist to the classroom for that purpose. Eszter Neuberger recommends including some advice on how to prepare for fieldwork, such as hints on funding opportunities and how to apply for them, but also more ethical aspects such as “helping your interviewees make informed decisions” about what they would like to pass on to a larger audience and what to avoid, and whether they want to have pictures of them published.

Tomáš Lindner believes it is important to point to the bigger picture of migration and forced displacement – both geographically and in terms of the various reasons and motives behind it:

“To show the story from different places. To write about what’s happening in a Bavarian village that welcomes refugees, but also to go to Lesbos and see what’s going on on that

island. And then also to go to Turkey, and write a reportage about Syrians in Istanbul for example. When it comes to the fact that people who come to Europe are not only refugees from war-torn countries, then you could go to Senegal.”

Tomáš Lindner, Editor, *Respekt*

Consequently, journalism teachers should handle the terminologies of migration and forced displacement with care. Journalism schools could prepare for the ethical dilemma reporters dealing with the issue often face, alongside informing about the traumatising experience of migrants and refugees. Teaching the political, geographical and socioeconomic backgrounds, along with the cultural and psychological sensitivity needed would help to prepare young professionals to cover the issue responsibly.

AI and Journalism, Robot Journalism and Algorithms

Ana Pinto-Martinho, Gustavo Cardoso, Miguel Crespo (ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon)

Automated journalism is also known as algorithmic journalism or robot journalism (Dörr 2016; Montal – Reich 2016; Graefe 2016) and consists of news articles generated by computer programmes. Through artificial intelligence (AI) software, stories are produced automatically by computers rather than human reporters. These programmes interpret, organise, and present data in human-readable ways. The process involves an algorithm that scans large amounts of data, selects from an assortment of pre-programmed article structures, orders key points, and inserts details such as names, places, amounts, rankings, statistics, and other figures. The output can also be customized to fit a certain voice, tone, or style (Dörr 2016; Montal – Reich 2016).

Until now, despite it being a growing trend, not that many media outlets worldwide have used automated journalism on a large scale³¹. Pioneer adopters include *The Associated Press*, *Forbes*, *ProPublica*, and *The Los Angeles Times*. Early implementations were mainly used for stories based on statistics and numerical figures. Common topics include sports recaps³², weather, financial reports, real estate analysis, and earnings reviews (Montal – Reich 2016). The *Associated Press* began using automation to cover 10,000 minor baseball leagues games annually.³³ Other than sports, the *Associated Press*

31 See a range of case studies: <https://www.lse.ac.uk/media-and-communications/polis/JournalismAI/Case-studies>

32 See an example from *The New York Times* at <https://www.techslang.com/how-is-automated-journalism-impacting-the-media/>

33 <https://www.poynter.org/tech-tools/2016/the-associated-press-will-use-automated-writing-to-cover-the-minor-leagues/>

uses automation to produce stories on corporate earnings. In 2006, *Reuters* announced their switch to automation to generate financial news stories on its online news platform (van Dalen 2012). More famously, an algorithm called Quakebot published a story about a 2014 California earthquake on *The Los Angeles Times* website within three minutes after the shaking had stopped (Carlson 2015; Cohen 2015).

Automated journalism is sometimes seen as an opportunity to free journalists from routine reporting, providing them with more time for complex tasks. It also might allow efficiency and cost-cutting, alleviating the financial burden that many news organisations face. However, automated journalism is also perceived as a threat to the authorship and quality of news and a threat to the livelihoods of human journalists. Graefe and Bohlken (2020) try to give some insights on the perception of automated news in the eyes of users in terms of credibility, quality, and readability in comparison to human-written news. In general, their study showed no difference in readers' perceptions of credibility, a small advantage for human-written news in terms of quality, and a huge advantage for human-written news with respect to readability (see also Jung et al. 2017).

By automating routine stories and tasks, journalists are promised more time for complex jobs such as investigative reporting and in-depth analysis of events (Dörr 2016; Montal – Reich 2016). *The Associated Press* stated³⁴ that, through automation, the news agency freed up 20 percent of reporters' time to focus on higher-impact projects. Automated journalism is also cheaper because more content can be produced within less time.

The main criticisms are related to authorship (who should be credited as the author?), credibility (are algorithms “fair and accurate, free from subjectivity, error, or attempted influence”, Gillespie 2014), quality (can machines replace human capabilities

34 <https://www.adexchanger.com/publishers/associated-press-uses-ai-boost-contentvideo/volume/021/02/11/powering-ahead-journalism-is-mission-in-2021/>

such as creativity, humour, and critical thinking?) and, looking to other activities where humans were replaced by real or virtual machines, the topic of employment. But the introduction of AI in journalism is growing, and projects such as JournalismAI intend to contribute to a wider and better use of it, allowing media organisations to explore how they could use AI technologies to approach a series of challenges, and support a growing network of almost 3,000 journalists across the world (Beckett 2021).

Artificial intelligence

Trying to achieve a definition of artificial intelligence, Mueller and Massaron's (2018) approach is a good starting point:

“When thinking about AI, notice an interplay between goal seeking, data processing used to achieve that goal, and data acquisition used to better understand the goal. AI relies on algorithms to achieve a result that may or may not have anything to do with human goals or methods of achieving those goals.”

(Mueller – Massaron 2018: 12)

Skiena explains algorithms as “a procedure that takes any of the possible input instances and transforms it to the desired output” (Skiena 2008: 3). Algorithms are a sequence of steps used to solve a problem and they are also as Mueller and Massaron (2017) argue finite, well-defined, and effective. Behind the ability to learn and interpret speech is machine learning technology (Mueller – Massaron 2016). Machine learning “addresses the question of how to build computers that improve automatically through experience” (Jordan – Mitchell 2015: 255). artificial intelligence includes machine learning, but machine learning does not fully define AI.

The true birth of AI as we know it today began with Alan Turing's (1950) publication of *Computing Machinery and Intelligence*, which explored the idea of how to determine whether machines can think. This paper pointed to the Imitation Game involving three players. Player A is a computer and Player B is a human. Each must convince Player C (a human who cannot see either Player A or Player B) that they are human. If Player C cannot determine who is, and who is not, human on a consistent basis, the computer wins. The same problem can be applied to using AI in journalism. For readers, listeners, and viewers AI must be able to develop a news story that cannot be identified as created by a non-human. But, in ethical terms, the discussion on whether media outlets should identify news stories created by AI is on-going, and there is no clear direction on the path to follow. Van Drunen et al. (2019) provide a framework of transparency instruments in the context of the news personalization algorithms.

A continuing problem with AI is too much optimism (Matteson 2015). The problem that scientists are trying to solve with AI is incredibly complex, even if machines were doing all sorts of amazing things, and AI has its greatest success in areas such as logistics, data mining, and medical diagnosis³⁵.

The adoption of artificial intelligence in newsrooms³⁶, either in reporting, production, or distribution of content, requires training, resources, and ethical debate. Training journalists and editors in general concepts related to artificial intelligence and subsequently in specific technical skills is crucial to promote an organisational culture open to the use of this technology. Implementing AI-based solutions also requires the development of a strategic vision, economic investment, interdisciplinary team building and the search for alliances with educational and technological organisations.

35 See also these examples: Why a Leading AI Expert Is So Optimistic About Humanity's Future: <https://asiasociety.org/blog/asia/why-leading-ai-expert-so-optimistic-about-humanitys-future>, Ma vs Musk on AI: The Optimistic Versus the Dystopian Viewpoint: <https://www.aitrends.com/ethics-and-social-issues/ma-vs-musk-on-ai-the-optimistic-versus-the-dystopian-viewpoint/>

36 4 Examples of AI's Rise in Journalism (And What it Means for Journalists): <http://mediashift.org/2016/09/4-examples-ais-rise-journalism-means-journalists/>

The processes developed with AI should be auditable, adjustable, transparent, and traceable, and respond to ethical standards of journalism; the latter is perhaps the most critical aspect of intelligence implementation in the media industry (see also Dörr –Hollnbuchner 2017).

Broussard et al. (2019) focus on the implications of AI for journalism in the larger context of the digitization of media and public life — a transition to apps, algorithms, social media, etc. In that sense, journalists can begin to learn what AI actually is (and is not), and explain such technologies to the public. The same path is designed by Diakopoulos (2019), as he argues that AI is a new medium through which journalists can express and exercise their ethical and normative values through the code they implement. According to Mueller and Massaron (2016), a true AI will eventually occur when computers can finally emulate the clever combination used by nature: (1) genetics: slow learning from one generation to the next; (2) teaching: rapid learning from organised sources, and (3) exploration: spontaneous learning through media and interactions with others.

Algorithms

All algorithms find solutions, the speedier and easier, the better. Using computers to solve problems by employing the appropriate algorithm speeds up the task significantly, which is the reason that the development of new algorithms has progressed so fast since the appearance of powerful computer systems. Algorithms determine how to interpret big data: process input data and create predictable outputs based on the data patterns. The data itself is not predictable. The reason you need AI and machine learning is to be able to see the patterns in the data and make sense of them (Mueller – Massaron 2016). Since the widespread adoption of the Internet, encounters with algorithmic procedures for “information retrieval” –

the activity of getting some piece of information out of a collection or repository of some kind – have become everyday experiences for most people in a large proportion of the world (Rieder 2020).

A simple definition of an algorithm is a systematic set of operations to perform on a given data set — essentially a procedure. The four basic data operations are create, read, update, and delete (CRUD). This set of operations may be the basis of everything you do with a computer. As the dataset becomes larger, the computer can use the algorithms found in an application to perform more work. The use of immense datasets, known as big data, enables a computer to perform work based on pattern recognition in a nondeterministic manner. In short, to create a computer setup that can learn, you need a dataset large enough for the algorithms to manage in a manner that allows for pattern recognition (Mueller – Massaron 2017: 23).

By combining big data with statistics, you can create a machine learning environment in which the machine considers the probability of any given event (but statistics is not the only machine learning method). One aspect that defined big data as “big” is the notion that while a human can learn something from “big data”, the magnitude of the dataset makes human recognition of the patterns impossible (or would take a long time to accomplish). Machine learning helps humans make sense and use of big data. Everything in machine learning revolves around algorithms.

So, according to Mueller and Massaron (2017), it is a sequence of steps used to solve a problem. The sequence presents a unique method of addressing an issue by providing a particular solution. An algorithm does not need to represent mathematical or logical concepts, but people most commonly use algorithms in this manner. Some special formulas are also algorithms, such as the quadratic formula. For a process to represent an algorithm, it must be: (1) finite – the algorithm must eventually solve the problem; (2) well-defined – the series of steps must be both precise and understandable; (3) effective – an algorithm must solve all cases of the problem, for which someone defined it. An algorithm should always solve the problem it has to solve.

Robot journalism

Robot journalism depends on AI and algorithms and partly, in machine learning, although this is only part of what a system requires to become an AI.³⁷ The machine learning portion of the system enables an AI to perform the following kinds of tasks: (1) adapt to new circumstances that the original developer did not envision; (2) detect patterns in all sorts of data sources; and (3) create new behaviours based on the recognized patterns, in other words, make decisions based on the success or failure of these behaviours.

In journalism, the robot is not some physical object or device, but a piece of software able to gather data, analyse it, identify the relevant events to build a news story³⁸ (the more unusual or unexpected, so it becomes news with interest for the audience), organise a sequence and then build a narrative using journalism “rules” and best practices. The result must be as good as a story written by a human, and for the consumer, it should not be identifiable as created by a robot. But, for now, fully automated journalism, (e.g. texts or visuals produced by AI alone) is still rather rare, while journalists increasingly rely on AI to facilitate their work (e.g. tools for data journalism).

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Automation processes are increasingly present in our everyday lives. These processes are now transversal to professions and practices, and journalism is not any different. However, there are substantial differences with regard to its use and

37 See examples from *The New York Times*, *Reuters*, and other media at <https://emerj.com/ai-sector-overviews/automated-journalism-applications/>

38 The Rise of the Robot Reporter, *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/05/business/media/artificial-intelligence-journalism-robots.html>

evolution in journalism in the countries of the study, as outlined by the interviews we conducted.

We interviewed journalists from five countries about AI and journalism, robot journalism and consequently algorithms: The Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, and Romania. Some work for legacy media, like the broadcaster *Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR)* from Germany and the *Česká tisková kancelář* (the Czech News Agency – ČTK). The other two newsrooms, *24.hu* in Hungary and *start-up.ro* in Romania, are online media and *Público*, from Portugal has both paper and online editions. Despite the differences in each country’s evolution of AI and journalism, most of our interviewees agree that the entrance of such techniques into newsrooms will be inevitable, so skills and literacy in these areas are crucial.

AI in newsrooms and media companies

Of the five interviewees, those from the Czech Republic, Germany and Portugal report that AI was being used in their newsrooms. This is not the case in the newsrooms our interviewees work in Hungary and Romania. Only one of the interviewees is dedicated more specifically to work with automation, Steffen Kühne. His media outlet, German regional public broadcaster *BR*, has a specific unit for developing and working with AI produced content:

“The AI + Automation Lab at Bayerischer Rundfunk was founded in March 2020. Our goal is to develop products to improve the news reporting, production, and distribution at our organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of AI-based approaches to automation and publishing.”

Steffen Kühne, Tech lead for the AI + Automation Lab at *Bayerischer Rundfunk*

Kühne also highlights that there are other teams at *Bayerischer Rundfunk* working with AI, especially in the areas of audience development, media production, archives, and platform development: “We are working together with those teams, for instance when it comes to metadata specifications, storage, and access. These are common topics that are crucial for the future development of automated products.”

Radka Matesová Marková from the Czech Republic and Rui Barros from Portugal mention that AI is important in their newsrooms, and there is work being done within the AI scope, although neither of their organisations have a specific unit for this purpose. The news stories produced by AI come from cooperation between the newsroom and the IT department.

“The development is carried out by the IT development team, in cooperation with editorial staff as needed. Strategic coordination is between the IT development director and the Editor-in-Chief. The specific algorithms are prepared by the IT development team together with some experienced news editors.”

Radka Matesová Marková, Editor-in-Chief, *Česká tisková kancelář*

Zsuzsanna Dömös points out that the use of AI in journalism and robot journalism is still not a common practice in Hungarian newsrooms:

“Here AI is not yet integrated into newsrooms. Even large media companies do not have adequate resources and access for this kind of solution. Journalism in Hungary is not keeping pace with the evolution of new technologies.”

Zsuzsanna Dömös, Technology journalist, *24.hu*

According to our interviewees, automated reporting, in the broader sense, can be used to cover a lot of stories that happen regularly and where results can be quantified (be transformed into structured data). The most common examples quoted were

reporting about sports, economy, health, weather, and traffic information. The interviewees are unanimous about the potential in using automated reporting but some of them point out that some stories would largely benefit from human editing and context work.

“Often, this type of reporting can still benefit from the work of reporters and editors, providing additional context on why unemployment has dropped or why a basketball game was lost.”

Steffen Kühne, Tech lead for the AI + Automation Lab at *Bayerischer Rundfunk*

The potential of AI and algorithms was mentioned as something that could benefit all kinds of journalistic products. Steffen Kühne says that investigative reports can use AI to make sense of huge document leaks or satellite data, mentioning that video editors can use specialized software to help organise hours of video footage or streamline colour grading. He also points out that there is a large chance for assistive technologies to reduce the number of tedious tasks for media workers.

In the three newsrooms that reported to have been working with AI, automation has been used. One example is the Czech case where the coverage of local and senate election results in 2018 and regional elections in 2020 was made using automation tools. “Since 2020 we are also using automation tools for regular news reports on petrol prices in the Czech Republic and monthly traffic accident statistics”, Radka Matesová Marková explains. In the Portuguese case, Rui Barros says that in the last year there was a lot of work being done regarding the reporting of the pandemic situation, and he suggests that automation has been very important:

“I dare say that the COVID-19 pandemic is the world’s first major data driven event. Numbers, but also their constant updating, have never been so important to people.

And here, the use of these techniques proved to be advantageous because they allowed the automation of processes.”

Rui Barros, Data journalist, *Público*

While stressing the advantages, our interviewees also reported some challenges linked to AI. Some mentioned that AI depends heavily on data quality, which is often problematic along with data availability. The integration of new software into the existing legacy systems can also be an issue, as Steffen Kühne points out:

“Incompatible interfaces or data models are oftentimes responsible for large development and management overhead. Training and deploying AI models in a cloud infrastructure can also be quite expensive and requires in-depth knowledge on how to optimize algorithms for speed, efficiency, and stability.”

Steffen Kühne, Tech lead for the AI + Automation Lab at *Bayerischer Rundfunk*

Another issue noted were problems raised by linguistic complexity since most models are developed for English:

“The worst thing that can happen to a reader is to feel that the text was produced by an algorithm due to some grammatical inconsistency or some edge case that was not thought of when the product was developed. In this aspect, the Portuguese language offers a lot of resistance.”

Rui Barros, Data journalist, *Público*

Labour cost is also an issue, because hiring machine learning experts with hands-on experience is no easy task due to high demand and labour costs, highlights Kühne. A solution for this problem, in his experience, at least partially, is networking, for example by participating in meetups or hackathons, or by establishing

collaborations with universities. This brings us to a very important point that is forcing media companies and universities to collaborate and push for interdisciplinary partnerships.

Education and training in the AI fields

In a field that is still in an embryonic stage in a lot of countries and newsrooms, it is important to try to understand if the training and teaching offered in universities and other training institutions do exist and whether they are adequate. Steffen Kühne, from Germany, and Radka Matesová Marková, from the Czech Republic, report that, to their knowledge, some universities recently started programmes that include automation in their curricula, where Rui Barros from Portugal, says that it may be in certain curricula, but not in a practical perspective (hands-on). Both Barros and Kühne emphasise that it is very important to work on awareness.

“Some colleges, universities and journalism schools have started to include news automation in their curricula. But it would be presumptuous to say that AI and automation have an overly high priority, especially when considering that traditional journalism training, with an emphasis on basic education, ethics and craftsmanship, is still very relevant today.”

Steffen Kühne, Tech lead for the AI + Automation Lab at *Bayerischer Rundfunk*

Nevertheless, some interviewees say that although it is a benefit for journalists to get more programming and AI related skills, they do not have to be experts in this area. Rather, collaboration between experts in the field of journalism, machine learning, software development, product and design is the secret to success, as Steffen Kühne clearly points out.

At present, as there is a lack of specific courses in this field, most of the journalists working in this area are self-taught, relying on their hands-on experience, with some of them going further in their education by taking some courses on programming, for example. Radka Matesová Marková states that she has no formal education in the field and gained her experience through self-study, participation in international conferences and participation in the development of automated journalism tools. Besides, she is a member of a team involving three Czech universities working on a three-year project exploring the ethical aspects of robotic journalism. Steffen Kühne also emphasises that most skills required to solve automation problems come from experience. He holds a degree in journalism and did a couple of semesters in computer science. Rui Barros' interest in this area came from his work as a data journalist. Inspired by what he saw in other international news outlets, Barros searched for information on how it was being done and started to “experiment”, a key word for all our interviewees.

In general, the importance and inevitability of AI in the newsrooms is recognized by all our interviewees, whether they use such techniques in their own work or not. Also, the interviewees mention the importance of not only being clear about how the automated work is done but also being transparent about the algorithms in use. Most of our interviewees are self-taught about these issues, sometimes reading and looking for information that helps them experiment, so it is clear that this an area where there is a need for training. Yet, training programmes should consist of several levels – from basic to more advanced – also because the implementation of AI into newsroom routines differs considerably between the countries under study.

Journalism for Voice-Activated Assistants and Devices

Miguel Crespo, Ana Pinto-Martinho, Gustavo Cardoso, Wanessa Andrade (ISCTE – University Institute of Lisbon)

Speech was human's first great tool for communication. By developing sounds capable of creating meaning for a group, human beings were able to exchange important information, such as threats to the group. Writing has emerged only very recently in human history: about 5,500 years ago (Harari 2019). The opposite was true in the history of the Internet: writing came first, then sound. IBM created the first voice recognition tool in 1961, the Shoebox, which recognized 16 words and digits³⁹. The Shoebox was experimental, and never marketed.

Slowly over the next fifty years other companies made progress in word recognition. But the big leap only arrived in the 21st century, with Apple's launch of Siri in 2011⁴⁰. From then on, these voice tools gained the definition of voice assistants, as they were able to listen to, respond and perform tasks through voice command. Since then, voice assistants have become popular and easily accessible to the global population. Currently five major voice assistants are available in Western markets: Siri by Apple (available for smartphones and Smart Speakers Apple Home), Alexa by Amazon (only for Smart Speaker), Google Assistant by Google (available for smartphones and Smart Speakers Google Home and Google Nest), Bixby by Samsung and Cortana by Microsoft. Cortana is a voice assistant for those who have Windows 10 installed on a PC.

39 https://www.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/specialprod1/specialprod1_7.html

40 <https://voicebot.ai/voice-assistant-history-timeline/>

There are almost eight billion people in the world. Around 66% of them have a smartphone, and most use a device with Android or IOS, i.e., have the availability to use voice assistants. According to some of the most recent surveys, considering all the devices, 45% of Internet users worldwide use voice commands and voice search⁴¹. In almost all age groups, men use voice assistants more than women. The exception is the 45-54 year group in which women and men use such devices equally often. In Germany, the usage figure is at 23.9%, in Romania 23.7% and in Portugal is 21.5%⁴². There is no data available on the use of voice assistants in Hungary and the Czech Republic.⁴³ Despite the disparities in devices and brands, the operation of voice assistants is similar. A keyword or question activates the system that turns voice into text, then into data, and then returns the path to answer the user's request in voice (CDEI 2019). Voice assistants use artificial intelligence, machine learning and algorithms to accurately meet the user's request.

Voice assistants are not available in all languages. Data updated in January 2021 shows that Apple's Siri voice assistant supports 21 languages (Arabic, Cantonese, Danish, Dutch, Finnish, English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malay, Mandarin, Norwegian, Portuguese [Brazil], Russian, Spanish, Swedish, Thai and Turkish). Siri also supports a variety of dialects for Chinese, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.⁴⁴ Google Assistant supports 44 languages on Android's smartphones⁴⁵. But the Google Home smart speaker is available for fewer languages: 13 (Danish, Dutch, English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese [Brazilian], Spanish and Swedish). Google Home

41 <https://wearesocial.com/digital-2021>

42 <https://wearesocial.com/digital-2021>

43 The reason may be that voice assistants are not available in all languages.

44 <https://wearesocial.com/digital-2020>

45 <https://venturebeat.com/2019/12/12/google-assistant-can-now-interpret-44-languages-on-smartphones/>

supports 4 globally dominant languages English, French, Spanish, and German as well as their dialects in 13 national setting – English (6): Australia, Canada, India, Singapore, UK, US; French (2): Canada and France; Spanish (3): Mexico, Spain, US and German (2): Austria, Germany. Amazon’s voice assistant Alexa is available in 8 globally dominant languages (English, French, German, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese [Brazilian] and Spanish) and supports dialects of 3 of the 8 – English (5): Australia, Canada, India, UK, US; French (2): Canada and France; Spanish (3): Spain, Mexico, US (GlobalMe 2021).

Voice assistants for news

The usage of voice-activated smart speakers for news remains low. The proportion of users listening to smart speakers for news is declining, despite the devices becoming more mainstream. Less than 40% of owners of voice-activated smart speakers access news via them in the US (35%), UK (39%), Germany (27%) and South Korea (25%) (GlobalMe 2021).

The issue of platform power is likely to become increasingly important for news publishers as Google and Amazon look to provide more aggregated news services via their voice assistants. But many publishers may not be interested in investing in new services, as there is no motivation in building value for other corporations’ platforms, which do not offer any paths to news monetisation. It is becoming more common to find research exploring how artificial intelligence (AI) can help communication professionals find and tell better stories (Prodigioso Vólcan 2020). Media outlets know how to safely develop products to be watched on TV, listened on radio, or read on Internet websites. But what is the best news product to be activated by voice assistants? How to ensure your news stories are considered relevant and appear as the first search result of these voice assistants?

These questions need topic specific solutions. First, in the context of newsrooms adopting AI, there is a widely recognized need to train journalists, as well as editors, to give them resources and encourage them to debate the ethics of AI use. Secondly, for the usage of AI to report, produce, and distribute content requires not only the knowledge of AI concepts but also specific technical skills to promote an organisational culture willing to use this advanced technology. Thirdly, for implementing AI-based solutions with success there has to be a strategic vision, sufficient economic investment, interdisciplinary team building and alliances with educational and technological organisations.

One of the first companies to experiment with the use of artificial intelligence through voice assistants was *The Evening Standard* in London in 2017. In the same year, the *BBC* launched, in partnership with Amazon, their first full voice skill for Alexa. The following year *The Guardian* launched, together with Google, the Guardian Voice Lab.

Algorithms are fundamental for voice assistants. When a person uses a search engine, a list with several websites appears. The algorithm defines these websites, and the user may choose from all options appearing on the various results pages. But in the case of smart speakers, the voice assistants take a much longer time to present the same results because each time the algorithm defines a single result for the user.

Using voice adds new layers of complexity because we tend to speak in unstructured text. One of the things that makes resolution especially complicated for a large AI system like Alexa is that each of Alexa services uses a distinct name — or slot — for the same data (Webb 2020). Also, as voice interfaces proliferate in people's lives, news publishers and other organisations face a new strategic consideration: Is our content optimized for voice search? And, looking further into the future, how should we index our content for future forms of interaction? A new marketing discipline is growing: Voice Search Optimization (VSO) is the new Search Engine Optimization (SEO), as companies – including news media outlets – will need to consider how their content is delivered via conversational interfaces.

Concerns

There is also another issue to be resolved by the companies that create voice assistants: privacy. There are numerous reports of cases, in which voice assistants have self-activated (Incrível n.d.). Researchers in Germany have also discovered more than a thousand other words and phrases that can unintentionally trigger Google Assistant, Alexa, Siri, and other assistants, in addition to their traditional activation words (NewVoice 2020).

Thus, trying to understand the reasons why news consumers do not (yet) use smart speakers is highly relevant (Figure 1). Even if in 2020 one third say they are simply uninterested for no reason, for another 33% the main reason not to have a smart device is that they are “concerned the device will record what I’m saying”. A quarter are happy with their smartphone functionality, 11% considers prices too expensive, and 7% hope to get one, with most of them hoping to do so in the next 12 months.

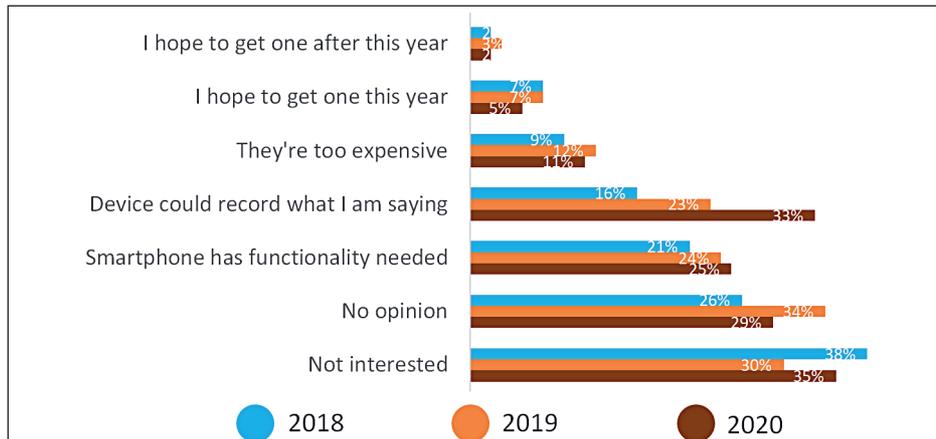


Figure 1: Reason consumers do not yet have a smart speaker
Source: Authors based on VoiceBot.ai (2020)

The impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have caused an increase in the use of voice assistants. An international survey by We Are Social and Hootsuite (Kemp 2020) shows that, during the initial stage of the pandemic, the time spent using smart speakers grew by 14%. In general, 45% of Internet users aged 16 to 64 use voice interfaces each month (Figure 2). High usage countries are those with large populations in Asia like India (60%), Indonesia (56%) and China (55%). The Portuguese speaking countries have a lower than the worldwide average usage (45%), with Brazil (40%) and Portugal (22%).

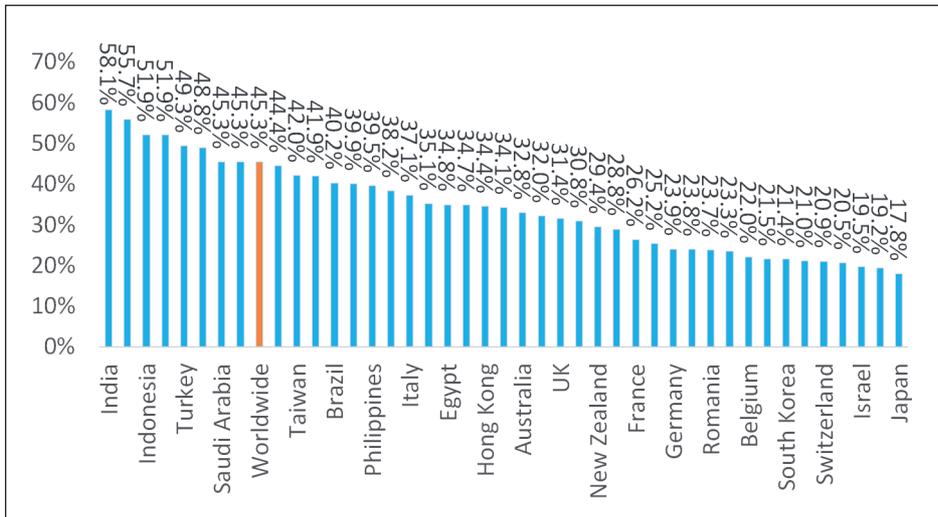


Figure 2: Use of voice search and voice interfaces by Internet users aged 16 to 64, January 2021.

Source: Authors based on Kemp (2021)

Research statistics forecast an increase in the consumption of voice-activated content, especially, by smart speakers. These devices should also consolidate their position as another platform for news distribution. But a platform that poses new challenges for the media, where algorithms and business models of third parties influence what content will be presented to the consumer (see Newman 2018 and Turow 2020, for analyses of how a further rise of voice-activated devices may reshape journalism).

It will be necessary to train journalists to understand the logic of this platform so they can prepare content that can easily get to people. It is also necessary to discuss a code of ethics surrounding the Internet of Things. The popularization of voice assistants and smart speakers also depends on the deployment of the 5G network across all countries, on the expansion of languages recognized by mainstream voice assistants and on better training of the existent natural language processing systems (NLPs) to recognize accents and ways of speaking that are different from the cultured norm or from the ways a language is spoken at large commercial centres.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

As voice-activated assistants and devices are a new technology and unavailable in many languages, our interviewees have more doubts than certainties about the current and future role of this technology in journalism. But our interviewees do say journalists should appreciate three key aspects of the technology. First, to understand the operating mechanisms of production and the challenges for consumers. Secondly, to be prepared to develop specific content, because data from other countries that already use smart speakers on a larger scale show that it is a platform with high growth in penetration and use, and so very promising in terms of content production. Thirdly, to understand the challenges each language poses to interaction between users and the devices' artificial intelligence.

We talked to journalists and professionals involved in the production of content to be activated by voice commands. Adam Javůrek is an analyst at *Český rozhlas* (Czech Radio), Zsuzsanna Dömös is a technology journalist working for independent news website *24.hu* in Hungary, Vlad Andriescu is editor-in-chief at a *start-up.ro* website specialising in news about digital start-ups in Romania and Miguel Lajes is business owner and digital innovator at Euroconsumers, an NGO defending consumer rights in five countries, four EU nations, one of which is Portugal, and Brazil. In the field of journalism, only *Český rozhlas* offers a skill for smart-speakers. Euroconsumers is developing skills in Portuguese, but is still in the testing phase. The aspect all interviewees report is that the main challenge in producing and distributing content through smart speakers is language (of the countries under study in this book, only German and Portuguese [from Brazil] are available.)

“Currently no smart speaker can speak Czech. But even controlling in English is not easy because the phrase ‘Czech Radio’ is heard as ‘check radio’ and therefore the query is not understood at all. The developers suggest that we should rename our skill, but of course it does not make any sense to have a different name than what the users will use (i.e. the name of our institution).”

Adam Javůrek, analyst, *Český rozhlas*

Other difficulties pointed out by the interviewees relate to the platforms’ business model, as Miguel Lage describes: “It’s not very clear [about] the ROI [Return on Investment] of these apps. Direct monetization is difficult and traffic volumes are still very low.” Other specialists reinforce this idea:

“I think that as a business model this area is not still there yet and cannot be monetized properly, with a proper ROI. In terms of algorithms, I don’t believe it to be so challenging. But for this to work you have to have an audio department to record all the content.”

Vlad Andriescu, Editor-in-Chief, *start-up.ro*

Regardless of the business model of the platforms, the interviewees point out that the production of content should be thought of in a different way than it is done nowadays. “If multimodal is not available (e.g. no screen) then content needs to be carefully designed just for the aural channel”, Miguel Lage suggests. The specificities of interaction through conversation are at the top of the priorities, for developers:

“On the one hand there is the possibility of interactivity, on the other hand users don’t want to make complicated choices and ideally don’t want to choose too often either - it’s about finding the right combination of simple and clear open-ended questions and long-term personalisation.”

Adam Javůrek, analyst, *Český rozhlas*

One of the clues that interviewees have looking at markets where smart speakers work in the local language is that podcasts are suitable content to be produced and consumed through these platforms.

“The best content for smart speakers would be news snippets for a morning digest or a late evening round up, also short podcasts of ten to fifteen minutes. Recipes would also be an appropriate type of product if the smart speaker is close to the kitchen, for example.”

Vlad Andriescu, editor-in-chief, *start-up.ro*

Content producers experience the dilemma of starting to develop products to get ahead of or waiting for the popularisation of the platform in their respective countries before it looks like to become a profitable business. Everything requires investment: time, knowledge and money. “That’s the million-dollar question: Up until now we are just expecting to grow the traffic and drive that traffic to other touch points where we apply our conversion funnel”, Miguel Lage concludes. Adam Javůrek (analyst, *Český*

rozhlás) agrees: “We’re not at the stage where we’re thinking about monetization yet. Redistribution itself is not costly and we would only consider the return on investment if original content was being created.” Vlad Andriescu (editor-in-chief, *start-up.ro*) anticipates other ways to support development costs: “The only way I can see it as feasible is through branded content projects and ad inserts for these snippets, which could be supported by a long-term commercial partner.”

Education and Training for Smart Speaker Journalism

Our interviewees acquired their qualifications through daily experience and exchange of information with professionals in the field of technology, rather than through formal education. They understand that preparing journalists for this reality while still in college is fundamental.

“I think that universities should look into the modern ways of creating content and adapting their curricula. We need to prepare students for a real multimedia environment, where a journalist is also a social media specialist, with basic understanding of delivering content on different kind of social media, but also knowing how to shoot video adapted for the Internet.”

Vlad Andriescu, editor-in-chief, *start-up.ro*

The interviewees suggest combining youth with academic studies as the best solution for the development of products and content for these devices.

“I think students who are digital natives have it easy today in understanding how to deliver content. Because they know how to deliver their personal content and just have to adapt it a bit to the rules of journalism. (...) A student could know how to deliver great

Tik Tok content, which can be journalistically relevant. So I would say that they should leverage the digital experience they have and adapt it to journalism.”

Vlad Andriescu, editor-in-chief, *start-up.ro*

Our respondents predict that this technology will become popular in all regions of the globe:

“I think that people will still consume written information, but they feel the need of curated content and audio and smart speakers can give them that feeling that they are receiving basically a news bulletin for the day, with all the relevant issues.”

Vlad Andriescu, editor-in-chief, *start-up.ro*

The new technology also brings some concerns to our respondents, which need to be discussed by companies and universities alike.

“According to reports, smart speakers are a growing market, but there are a number of barriers to adoption, for example privacy concerns, I think companies have to work on that. Experts advise publishers to make existing content accessible and findable through voice. I think the next step is to offer differentiated audio content that works across multiple platforms. Early adopter companies will move in that direction.”

Zsuzsanna Dömös, technology journalist, *24.hu*

So, at this moment, content development for smart speakers and voice assistants, in the countries of origin of our interviewees, still raises concerns on what and how to do it and how to solve major language barriers and problems. Difficulties in identifying the best kind of content, how to interact with users and how to monetize the content are obvious. But the differences in consumption through voice interfaces, compared with written interaction on other media channels, is also a major challenge

for producers to master. In terms of knowledge and skills needed to work in this field, the specialist interviewees point to a solid background in communication, but with applied skills in multimedia production, some technological expertise and intense digital media use.

Verifying and Analysing Fake News

Antonia Matei, Mihaela Păun, Marian Popovici (University of Bucharest)

Definitions

While contemporary discussions on false information in online and social media seem ubiquitous, the phenomenon of fakery has much older roots. Thus, there are many definitions in the literature. Winston and Winston (2021: 17) suggest “the ‘fake news’ phenomenon is not a new problem. It is not just older than Facebook et al, it is older than the newspaper itself, or the presses used to print it.” Moreover, the same authors argue, “the term fake news can acceptably describe, on a common-sense basis, pure fiction masquerading as fact” (Winston – Winston 2021: 11).

Starting with a generic definition, Allcott and Gentzkow (2017: 213) describe fake news as “news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers”. Shu et al. (2020) defined fake news as disinformation, misinformation or even malinformation. Thus, disinformation is fake or inaccurate information intentionally spread to either or both mislead and deceive, while misinformation is false content shared by a person who does not realize it is false or misleading. In the case of malinformation, the information is genuine and shared with an intent to cause harm (Shu et al. 2020: 2-3).

Wardle (2017) compares disinformation with misinformation, concluding that we cannot struggle only with the concepts of news and fake, and it is rather about the entire information ecosystem:

“While misinformation refers to ‘the inadvertent sharing of false information,’ disinformation implies ‘the deliberate creation and sharing of information known to be false’;

To understand the current information ecosystem, we need to break down three elements:

- The different types of content that are being created and shared
- The motivations of those who create this content
- The ways this content is being disseminated.”

(Wardle 2017)

But how can we identify what is fake and what is real? According to Barclay (2018), there are nine essential questions everyone should ask to find out whether or not information is fake:

“(1) Who created the information? (2) Who published the information? (3) What comes after the headline? (4) What sources are cited? (5) How old is the information? (6) What do others think of the information? (7) Is the information a primary or a secondary source? (8) Is the information a joke? (9) Is the information different from anything you have ever seen?”

(Barclay 2018: 115)

Typologies

As can be easily noticed, the concept “fake news” has many meanings. Wardle (2017) identifies seven types of mis- and disinformation: (1) satire or parody – no intention to cause harm but has potential to fool, (2) misleading content – misleading use of information to frame an issue or individual, (3) imposter content – when genuine sources are impersonated, (4) fabricated content – new content is 100% false, designed to deceive or to harm, (5) false connection – when headlines, visual or captions do not support the content, (6) false context – when genuine content is shared with false

contextual information, (7) manipulated content – when genuine information or imagery is manipulated to deceive.

Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) also analysed the perspective of fake news as news articles that are intentionally and verifiably false, and could mislead readers but in contrast to Wardle’s multiple categories, propose just two types of fake news: (1) intentionally fabricated news articles, and (2) satirical articles that can be misinterpreted as non-satirical (Allcott – Gentzkow 2017). They exclude from their definition several “close cousins of fake news” (Allcott – Gentzkow 2017: 214), like unintentional reporting mistakes, conspiracy theories, and lies told by politicians (Allcott and Gentzkow cited in Barclay 2018: 30-31).

Barclay (2018: 55-56) presents a three-category classification of fake news: (1) mercenary fake news – created for profit with no concern about the content of the message, (2) fake news with an agenda – propaganda, or (3) satirical fake news – created for humorous purposes but may also function as political or social commentary and criticism. In a review of previous studies that have used the term fake news, Tandoc et al. (2017: 11) suggest there are six categories: (1) news satire, (2) news parody, (3) fabrication, (4) manipulation, (5) advertising, and (6) propaganda.

Journalism and fake news

Traditionally, journalism implies the gathering of accurate and factual information obtained from reliable and double-checked sources before publication. However, the media landscape is undergoing a major change due to technological disruptions and the information-sharing logic of the social media era, arguably amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. We may conclude that classical journalism, as we know it, is under siege. Simply because anyone can post anything anytime without the slightest verification puts enormous pressure on journalists who, as professional ethics requires, are obliged

to check the information before publication. The continuous flow of news and the rush for shares, likes and clicks sometimes makes journalists pick up and publish unauthentic information from unreliable sources with misquotes, fake attributions or misrepresentations (Winston – Winston 2021). The public loses faith in mainstream media and its content and makes room for fake news. That is why journalists need to follow professional rules and strive to ensure that their reports are correct and rigorous.

Alan Rusbridger (2018: 178), former editor-in-chief at *The Guardian*, considers that in a sense, journalism is a public service, just like the police or fire department. Editors and reporters provide valuable and accurate information that the public needs to make informed decisions. But a new danger arises: “fake news’ (...) is usually free - meaning that people who cannot afford to pay for quality journalism, or who lack access to independent public service news media, are especially vulnerable to both disinformation and misinformation” (Berger 2018: 8). Unfortunately, nowadays, both “information (and misinformation) are cheap and easy to produce, manipulate, and spread. That has lowered the barriers to entry to the information market and vastly increased the volume and speed of information flow” (McBrayer 2021: 19).

In this context, quality journalism holds the key to tackle fake news. Thinking critically about information and its origin, using trusted sources, seeking primary evidence, verifying the information that journalists receive and last, but not least, fact-checking. Indeed, “fact-checking is not rocket science”, as Mantzarlis explains:

“It is scrupulous analysis driven by one basic question: ‘How do we know that?’ At the same time, fact-checking is not spell-checking. There is not a dictionary-style guidebook with all the facts, nor a simple software that will examine documents and flag anytime something has been misstated as fact.”

(Mantzarlis 2018: 84)

Mantzarlis identifies three phases of the process of fact-checking: (1) finding fact-checkable claims; (2) finding the facts and (3) correcting the record (Mantzarlis 2018).

Social media and the spread of fake news

Social media is a popular way of consuming news. There were 3.7 billion people around the world using social media in 2021⁴⁶. Thus, it is a very good environment for information seeking and news consumption. Yet, social media is also a fertile ground for disinformation and fake news. Tandoc (2021) believes that the increasing number of people who get their news from social media instead of local news websites leads to various consequences:

“Individuals judge a news story’s credibility not only on who shared it on social media, but also on the number of likes, comments and shares. Fake news producers therefore often produce clickbait content to get more people to like, share, or comment on their fake stories, often playing into readers’ biases or interests.”

(Tandoc 2021: 10-11)

The spread of fake news on social media can take various forms and disinformation can become misinformation, as misleading information has a dynamic nature, causing different types of information disorder, as Shu et al. (2020) explain:

“For example, a disinformation creator can intentionally distribute the false information on social media platforms. People who see the information may be unaware that it is false and share it in their communities, using their own framing. On the other hand,

46 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/278414/number-of-worldwide-social-network-users/>

misinformation can also be transformed into disinformation. For example, a piece of satire news may be intentionally distributed out of the context to mislead consumers.”

(Shu et al. 2020: 3)

Fake news is not a new phenomenon and Greifeneder et al. (2021) suggest there are several reasons for why this trend of disinformation is growing in the digital age. Primarily, the barriers of entry in news media have dropped significantly because websites can be easily created and monetized. Secondly, the cost of getting on social media is low to non-existent, which reduces incentives for the long-term presence associated with quality journalism. The third reason explained by the authors is a decline in public trust and confidence in mainstream media.

According to Statista, Facebook is the most popular social media network, with nearly 3 billion users in 2021, which is 1 billion more than in 2016⁴⁷. In recent years, Facebook promised to tackle “fake news” in order to make the network a safer place and fight this plague:

“At Facebook, we’re working to fight the spread of false news in three key areas: disrupting economic incentives because most false news is financially motivated; building new products to curb the spread of false news; and helping people make more informed decisions when they encounter false news.”

(Facebook n.d.: para 1)

Regarding the disruption of economic incentives, Facebook has taken some steps towards stopping spammers from making money: better identifying false news through the user community and third-party fact-checking organisations, making it as difficult as possible for people posting false news to buy ads, applying machine

47 <https://www.statista.com/statistics/264810/number-of-monthly-active-facebook-users-worldwide/>

learning to assist the response teams in detecting fraud and updating detection of fake news accounts on Facebook. Facebook is also building new products to limit the spread of fake news: Ranking improvements which includes feedback from the community, easier reporting and working with independent third-party fact-checking organisations. Despite these efforts, social media still remain a fertile ground for sharing false information, especially in a health crisis that leads to many controversies about the coronavirus.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Fake news has become a constant since the pandemic started. To further examine the journalistic struggle against fake news, we conducted four interviews with journalists from the Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal, and Romania. Kathrin Wesolowski is the only one who is a specialized fact checker, while Jan Tvrdon, Paulo Pena and Adriana Turea are journalists who on a daily basis deal with fake news and disinformation. The phenomenon is not new, but has experienced a boom since 2020, according to all our interviewees.

Given the multifaceted aspect of the issue, we also asked our interviewees how they themselves define the term. From the point of view of Kathrin Wesolowski, a freelance journalist who, amongst other outlets, works for the fact-checking team of Germany's international broadcaster *Deutsche Welle*, fake news comprises

“false claims and false information being spread via media as well as via speech. Some people spread them due to political aims or also to make money (via click baiting for example). In the worst case, fake news can even cause medical risks or push you to a political direction.”

Kathrin Wesolowski, freelance journalist, Germany

On the other hand, Adriana Turea believes that fake news is built on a well-established pattern: it is based on a small part of the truth and the rest are lies mingled with facts. It starts with real information, then something concocted follows, then there are some real details and finally, again, something fake. Jan Tvrdoň says that fake news could be spread on purpose, but it is not a rule. “Fake news is not basically news, it’s information, which is false, fabricated or misleading. It could be spread on purpose but it’s not necessary”, he claims. Paulo Pena opines

“fake news is the intentional creation of a lie with the purpose to manipulate the public debate, and it depends on the process to use that lie in online campaigns that spread it with fake profiles, [and] bots, until it reaches and convinces large groups of real people.”

Paulo Pena, Freelance Journalist, Portugal

All the interviewees stressed the connection between fake news and politics. Kathrin Wesolowski says that fake news in Germany pushes people into political directions such as the far right and, thus, is a threat to democracy. Recently, in Germany, thousands of people have demonstrated on the streets against restrictions due to the Coronavirus and often they based their participation in the protests on information gained from fake news. Jan Tvrdoň says that fabricated lies affected political campaigns and nowadays the main focus of the fake news producers is the COVID-19 crisis. “What is particularly sad to look at in Czech Republic is that some fake news is/was spread by the highest politicians in the lead with the President.”

Paulo Pena says fake news in Portugal represents an important business that generates advertisement income for the sites that publish them, but it is also an “alternative” source of information for political spheres that consider traditional media to be “biased” about topics such as migration or religion. Jan Tvrdoň believes that the main typology of fake news to be found in Czech media is the false context,

but says that most of the media in the country do not spread fake news on purpose, but on the other hand the media are under serious pressure to publish fast. Adriana Turea (*Radio România*) feels the same pressure to broadcast information as soon as possible, which makes it very difficult to verify all the details correctly.

The COVID-19 crisis changed the disinformation ecosystem in all five countries under study. Adriana Turea believes that during the pandemic, fake news also spread because the authorities were not transparent enough, so people stopped believing in them. According to Jan Tvrdoň says, most fake news in the Czech Republic is now COVID-related. While in his opinion, seniors are most affected, nobody is immune to fake news:

“Before the pandemic, fake news information was focused on the cleavage of elite vs. common people, international affairs (mostly pro-Russian news) and on attacks on EU or western civilization. By March 2020 it focused on basic communication – COVID was artificially fabricated/it’s not dangerous/it has nothing to do with China/it’s the next try to control people. [This fabrication] lasts to this day.”

Jan Tvrdoň, Editor, *Deník N*

In Germany, before the pandemic, fake news was popular among people who were likely to follow right-wing parties or right-wing ideals, but since the pandemic it seems as if everybody is exposed to it, according to Kathrin Wesolowski., “It can be a matter of education but it’s also a matter of what you want to believe or don’t want to believe”, as Kathrin Wesolowski explains. She states that since the pandemic many people learn more about understanding what sources you can trust or inform themselves generally more about a topic. In Portugal, before the pandemic, Paulo Pena perceived fake news as mostly focusing on corruption, state organisation, and nepotism. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a rush of organised disinformation about health, public policies related to the emergency and vaccines.

Social media and the spread of fake news

In the Czech Republic, Germany, Portugal and Romania, our interviewees consider that false information is mainly spread via social media and blogs. Social media fuels the spread of fake news because people are oftentimes connected with other people they know. Therefore, they tend to believe people they know if they share something that is fake. While in Romania disinformation and misinformation are spread via Facebook and WhatsApp, in Germany the platform Telegram seems more popular, because there are no regulations. In the Czech Republic, fake news is spread mostly on Facebook, while in Portugal social media is such fertile ground for fake news dissemination. This is because the online platform business model can sell a much bigger number of users to companies that buy commercial ads. According to Paulo Pena, this is the logic of algorithms that favour engagement over information, and try to profit with both media content and disinformation.

In Germany, all types of disinformation outlined above are spread in social media. The process begins with photoshopped images or pictures with false contextual information. Some spreaders use satire to hide their intention of spreading fake news – but many people do not recognize such content as satire or parody. The dangerous aspect, in the opinion of Kathrin Wesolowski, is that even highly educated people (such as doctors and professors) spread false information, so people believe in it even more. More than that, celebrities also share false information, irrespective of whether it is satire, fabricated content or false context. Jan Tvrdoň considers that it is essential to understand that Facebook is not a platform suitable for spreading high quality information because it is a business, and the interest is to maximize profits.

The Czech journalist adds that, besides from Facebook, the recklessness of readers is also an important element that contributes to the spread of fake news in the Czech Republic. In this context, Kathrin Wesolowski believes that it is difficult to say if a regulation on social media helps – in the worst-case people will just

look for other platforms, which are not being regulated (yet) and will spread fake-news and look for alternative information there. Jan Tvrdoň and Adriana Turea say they do not see any effects of the Facebook anti-fake news strategy. The Romanian journalist states that it is very easy for fake news to spread via social media platforms because people are always checking their phones and once they see a story they do not take the time to read it all and just share it. The consequences are that an increasing number of people who use social media to get their news are in danger to getting in touch with disinformation, says Kathrin Wesolowski. However, the fake news situation is a chance for media outlets to be more present in social media as well and to professionalize journalism on social media platforms.

Since millions of people can publish something at the same moment, an effective regulation for social media is very hard to manage, according to Kathrin Wesolowski.

“Though Facebook, for example, works with fact-checkers worldwide and Twitter, for example, also tries to implement a kind of fact-checking service, it will never be possible to detect all fake news, also because there’s a fine line between regulation and censorship. Also, it’s not always easy to define whether something is a claim or just an opinion.”

Kathrin Wesolowski, Freelance journalist, Germany

In social media from Portugal, both fabricated content (manipulated images, false quotes) and false context (namely republished old news as current, decontextualization) are the most frequent methods used in disinformation campaigns in the larger social networks (Facebook, the largest; Twitter; YouTube; Instagram and WhatsApp, were the most used for pandemic related disinformation in the first half of 2020, according to Paulo Pena).

“Also, the algorithm of social media platforms such as Facebook or Instagram contributes to the spread of fake news because if you like several fake news sites or right-winged

fake news spreading platforms, the social media platforms will likely show you more of such content.”

Kathrin Wesolowski, Freelance journalist, Germany

So, according to the interviewees the most common vector for spreading fake news is a mixture of algorithmic designs, and the education and inner will of individuals to believe in fake news.

Fake news and journalism

German, Romanian, Portuguese and Czech journalism are affected by fake news because of the perception that more and more people stop believing any traditional media and do not trust leading politicians. But there is also a good perspective about that, as the Czech and Romanian interviewees point out, because journalists are forced to provide their sources and to work even better regarding good sources and professional interview partners. Adriana Turea believes that quality journalism in Romania suffers because disinformation increasingly spreads:

“Our profession has changed lately and not for the better. Many journalists are no longer looking for information that will help people. They are only searching for breaking news and scandals. It really saddens me, because I want to bring useful information to people.”

Adriana Turea, Journalist, *Radio România*

The quality of information in Portugal was debatable before the surge of disinformation but media outlets did not use the chance to improve their debate with citizens, according to Paulo Pena. The Portuguese state does support media literacy

campaigns, but the trust in traditional media will erode if this debate does not start soon.

To prevent disseminating fake news, *Deutsche Welle* created a fact-checking department whose goal is to uncover disinformation or to provide good background articles to understand difficult topics – but there is no special policy in place on how to deal with fake news according to Kathrin Wesolowski. The *Radio România* newsroom does not apply a special editorial policy regarding fake news, too, but Adriana Turea says that she always verifies information from reliable sources. Jan Tvrdoň also says that his newsroom does not have any extraordinary policies regarding fake news, but the standard rules are followed:

“There needs to be a clear distinction between the genres (opinions and news.) No article is issued without reliable sources. These are no extraordinary rules. [But] thanks to [the rules we do have] we possess credibility, but they also lead to a constant delay [fact checking] the fake news producers who are not that bothered about sources.”

Jan Tvrdoň, Editor, *Deník N*

Fake news and journalism education

Kathrin Wesolowski did not learn fact-checking during her journalism studies but on a research trip in Georgia where she met fact-checkers from local media outlets. Then, she did her own research about fact-checking tools and in May 2020 the German independent media *Correctiv* employed her as a fact-checker. She learnt fact-checking through “learning by doing”. Paulo Pena studied communication sciences, while neither Jan Tvrdoň nor Adriana Turea have a formal degree in journalism and have therefore acquired their knowledge through every day assignments. Jan has worked for 6 years

in the factchecking project *Demagog.cz* (a member of the International Fact-Checking Network, ICFN) and Adriana has over 15 years of journalistic experience. Kathrin Wesolowski believes that not many journalism students or journalists consider working as fact-checkers because it is not represented in journalism programmes. She believes the programmes should have more courses on fact-checking because fact-checking skills are important across all types of journalistic positions.

The Romanian reporter Adriana Turea considers that one solution to combat fake news is to improve the education of both the population and the journalists. Moreover, she claims that the Romanian education system needs a drastic change. Pupils should learn, as early as possible, not only about the media system, but also about health and medical issues. She also believes that journalists need to take more specialized courses in the fields in which they work (whether medical, financial, social, cultural or any other) because media faculties offer their students only the basic information, rather than an in-depth insight into all relevant fields. Paulo Pena says young Portuguese graduates and novice journalists face a dramatic crisis in both economic and editorial media models. Jobs are scarce and underpaid. He believes that online privacy, identity and freedom of choice of algorithms are subjects that should be introduced in schools.

To sum it up, all the interviewees agreed on the importance of educating students in this field and point towards the scarcity of specialized offers. Journalism curricula should thus include courses on the backgrounds of and how to deal with what many perceive as a deluge of disinformation.

Debunking Disinformation

Raluca Radu, Emilia Șercan, Manuela Preoteasa (University of Bucharest)

The Cambridge dictionary defines *debunk* as “to show that something is less important, less good, or less true than it has been made to appear”⁴⁸, and provides the example on how the verb can be used when talking about debunking a myth. In professional media discourse, debunking in the contexts of fake news and viral hoaxes covers both verification and fact-checking.

Debunking, verifying and fact-checking

The International Fact-Checking Network at Poynter Institute distinguishes between verification and fact-checking, indicating that verification is done before publication, mainly for user generated content found online, while fact-checking is done after the publication of “claims of public relevance”, using expert sources (Mantzaris 2018: 87-88). As a result, debunking is a type of fact-checking that targets incorrect and misleading claims and widely held opinions, relevant to a community, that uses tools developed for verification purposes: “Debunking is a subset of fact-checking and requires a specific set of skills that are in common with verification” (Mantzaris 2018: 87).

Scholars use debunking as a synonym for negating (Betsch – Sachse 2013), contradicting (Heng 2018) or correcting (Chan et al. 2017), as well as correcting and debiasing (Lewandowsky et al. 2012) in connection with stereotypes, conspiracy theories or with

48 <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/debunking>

widely held incorrect views. As misinformation interferes in the process of decision making in all aspects of life, from disease prevention to voting, scholars consider debunking is an important scientific as well as democratic process, that should be supported by public policy (Berry – Sobieraj 2013; Gorman – Gorman 2016; Chan et al. 2017).

Debunking fake news or misinformation is an operation of deconstructing an untruth or a myth and implies fact-checking instruments. The growth of fact-checking practices around the world rose along with the global dissemination of “fake news”, which Mantzarlis describes as “fabricated sensationalist stories that reach enormous audiences by using social media algorithms to their advantage” (2018: 87). However, fact-checkers conduct the debunking procedure, which Graves and Cherubini (2016), contend is represented by two models in Europe: the “newsroom model” and the “NGO model”. The former describes fact-checkers affiliated to an established media company, while the latter refers to specialized fact-checking outlets that operate independently of traditional media.

Alexios Mantzarlis (2018) distinguishes between fact-checkers employed in newsroom for proofreading and verifying facts *before* an article is published and fact-checkers – attached to a newsroom or not – that work for confirming an information or a claim *after* it is made public. By extension, some differences between verification and fact-checking have been made with the former being an “ex-ante” process of seeking or confirming primary evidence that can be published in a story, while fact-checking is an “ex-post” process of claims analysis (Mantzarlis 2018; see also previous chapter).

Fact-checking for professional journalists, Graves (2016) argues, “refers to a certain set of reporting practices and to the stories these yield. It increasingly denotes a genre, like ‘news analysis’ or ‘Q&A’, involving a more-or-less standard set of conventions for research and presentation” (Graves 2016: 24). The geographically wider use of “fact-checking” practice (any analysis that publicly challenges a competing account), which brings criticism and tends to associate the fact-checking to an opinion genre, is an assertion rejected by the professionals (Graves 2016: 27). However, “fact-checking

as a whole belongs to the ‘space of opinion’ in this broader sense of a sphere of elite contestation over politics and policy” (Graves 2016: 27).

Usually, fact-checkers focus their attention and resources on politicians, journalists, experts, and public figures (Graves – Cherubini 2016; Humprecht 2020). Debunking, in the context of viral hoaxes, explores more deeply than any attempt to verify what would be rated as user generated content online. Lewandowsky et al. (2020: 12-13) explain that a debunking, as a presentation of correct facts, involves four components, with four separate foci: (1) fact – state what is true; (2) warn about myth – mention the misinformation only once at this stage; (3) explain fallacy – show why misinformation is wrong; (4) fact – state the truth again. The aim of the debunking process is to provide corrections for misleading information, erroneous claims, false rumours or modified photos or videos.

Debunking alone does not work properly

Effective debunking is difficult, as newsrooms’ experiences and academic research has proved time and again. False news stories spread further, faster, and deeper than the truth, as the authors of an 11-years study on almost 3 million Twitter users discovered (Vosoughi et al. 2018). For assessing the impact of fact-checking, Bounegru et al. (2018) use a two-step method to measure how fact-checking initiatives reach the publics of fake news: (1) first, by identifying the URLs of the debunking web pages; (2) by measuring the engagement of the audience with fake news and debunking stories, comparatively.

Vosoughi et al. (2018) invalidate two widely held hypotheses, on who exactly is spreading false information. Contrary to what we would expect, robots spread rumours and verified information at the same rate, leaving the burden of spreading false news wider and faster than the truth on real people. Again, contrary to what was expected,

data analysis clearly indicates that people who spread false news are less connected and less active on Twitter.

More recently, after analysing the type, sources and claims of misinformation about the COVID-19 crisis, Brennen et al. (2020) also point to the disproportionate relation between the wide exposure of the distorted content and the field of coverage of the eventual debunking. They conclude that “it is imperative that trusted fact-checking and media organisations continue to hold prominent figures to account for claims they make across all channels and find new ways to distribute and publicise their work” (Brennen et al. 2020: 8).

Zollo et al. (2017) in a study on the behaviour of 54 million Facebook users over a period of five years indicate that both conspiracy prone people and followers of scientific pages responded negatively to debunking posts. Both types of Facebook users interacted mostly with users sharing similar interests, confirming the hypothesis of echo chambers. People tend to look for information that supports their previously held views of the world – a behaviour called “confirmation bias” (Kahneman 2011). Joining a group of peers, such as an echo chamber, supports this bias, as “much of the discussion we seek with others in moments of elevated emotion is not necessarily focused on new factual information sharing as much as is focused on reassurance, coping with stress and ritualistic bonding” (Southwell 2013, cited in Gorman – Gorman 2016). Any individual may join a polarized group while seeking information and emotions will keep the individual active inside the group.

Decision making is difficult, so individuals tend to reduce complexity by resorting to cognitive fallacies (Kahneman 2011), such as incorrect links among data, based on plausibility (conjunction fallacy) or flawed stories that seem stronger than actual statistical data (narrative fallacies). Even scientifically trained individuals base their decision making on reference points and on possible outcomes, but also on how the possible outcomes are presented, as winning / saving lives or losing / people will die, as Kahneman (2011) points out.

Seeking, understanding, critically evaluating and using information is further hindered by media literacy (Livingstone 2004) and by functional literacy (Vosoughi et al. 2018). Rumour and false news become viral because they seem new. The surprise of their novelty is stronger for people who do not understand how social media functions, and who are the sources of a false information (Vosoughi et al. 2018). Consequently, social media users need to know what the reasons are for creating and sharing unsubstantiated information and how they may find and identify correct information. Even if confronted with correct information that contradicts previous rumours, false news or conspiracy theories, people may resist changing their opinions. Resistance to attitude change is explained by the inoculation theory, which indicates how persuasion works, by using a metaphor from the medical field. A person who is advised that future counterarguments are a threat to an existing belief and is presented with weaker arguments that contradict a desired attitude, develops over time, a resistance to stronger counterarguments (Compton – Pfau 2005).

If we add the process of increased polarization in society, the social background of debunking becomes even more problematic. Kavanagh and Rich (2018: 152) argue: “Polarization drives increasing disagreement about facts and interpretations of those facts and the blurring of the line between opinion and fact by creating two or more opposing sides, each with its own perspectives and beliefs”. Polarization evolves over time: In times of extreme crises (such as wars or even COVID-19), politicians from either side of the political spectrum may find themselves thinking in the same way, and this allows the mobilization of the resources in one community that on its turn allows people to overcome the very difficult times. Strategical political communication increases polarization, so that parties gain more votes from radicalized supporters.

Discussion of possible threats by others and exposure to counter arguments could, in fact, coagulate more polarized groups, both online or offline, making them immune to debunking. Recent research, based on Reuters Institute *Digital News Report* data (Fletcher – Nielsen 2018; Fletcher 2020) indicate that the usage of social networks

and search engines expose people to diverse news sources that they would not access and use otherwise. This research contradicts the filter bubble hypothesis (see Flaxman et al. 2016), that people maintain an erroneous view of the world because they are not exposed to different opinions. The invalidation of the filter bubble hypothesis represents yet another argument that effective debunking is difficult, and we have to use other techniques or strategies to effectively counteract viral false news and hoaxes, apart from merely telling people what the correct information is. It is important to act and debunk false information, when it seems to gain momentum and reach wider and wider audiences. Still, preventive measures, such as media literacy projects for different socio-demographic groups or inoculation strategies against very sensitive disinformation campaigns, on subjects related to health, for example, are as important as debunking.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The five interviews we conducted include prominent journalists in their field of expertise and aim to map their views on the debunking activities in their countries, on the risk associated with the process, on the training and education programmes related to the field.

Debunking - European organisational models

To evaluate the state of debunking as a journalistic process, we conducted interviews with five journalists from the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, and Romania. These journalists work in newsrooms that represent different models of organising the debunking process in Europe.

Nikita Poljakov is the editor-in-chief of *E15*, an online Czech business daily. He won a Journalism Award (Open Society Foundation) for online journalism with the project “Russian propaganda and disinformation campaigns in the Czech Republic” released on the online daily *Aktualne.cz*. He lectures on how to combat fake news at Charles University in Prague. Marie Richter is Managing Editor of NewsGuard Germany. NewsGuard is an international company that analyses and rates news websites on journalistic criteria. The sites get a rating based on a traffic light system (red and green), depending on how transparent and credible they are. Analyses of red marked websites include examples of false information, alongside debunking related to that information. Marie Richter heads the Germany team that analyses and fact-checks German language websites. Katalin Erdélyi, our Hungarian interviewee, started writing about politics and corruption as a hobby in 2008 on the political commentary blog *Vastagbőr* (“Thick Skin”). Since 2012, she has been working as an investigative journalist for *Átlátszó* (“Transparent”), Hungary’s first and biggest investigative news portal and an NGO, and since December 2018 she has run the news portal as deputy editor-in-chief. *Átlátszó* has a debunking column. Fernando Esteves, Founder and Director of *Polígrafo*, answered our questions in Portugal. *Polígrafo* is the only Portuguese fact-checking website and also uses a traffic light system to rate news and public declarations as true or false and to debunk widely spread information. In Romania, we interviewed Codruța Simina, reporter at *PressOne*, an independent online media outlet. She is the Founder of *Misreport*, a weekly online newsletter about disinformation.

The amount of debunking efforts in the countries we compared seems to be closely connected to the development level of the media system. In Portugal, for example, there is little debunking done by newsrooms, and *Polígrafo* is the only native fact-checking site. The other more noticeable fact-checking effort is a column at *Observador*, a digital newspaper. Yet, debunking “is crucial”, believes Fernando Esteves, because “democracy in general is in danger”. Whereas in Germany or in Portugal, journalists doing fact-checking and debunking are not in danger, in authoritarian regimes, or in

countries in crisis situations, like Brazil or Ukraine, journalists face dangers while debunking viral false stories, considers Fernando Esteves.

In Germany, debunking efforts are more widely spread. There is *Correctiv*, a non-for-profit organisation, maintaining a specialized team. NewsGuard Germany uses a business-to-business model to fund its activities. There are fact-checking departments in some major public service media newsrooms, and also at *dpa*, Germany's largest news agency, and other commercial newsrooms.

“Newsrooms are quite involved in fact-checking and with every crisis that happens I think the media in Germany are becoming more and more aware of its importance: the refugee crisis showed that, [and] the ongoing climate crisis is another topic, where [in] general, regular journalists are required to do fact-checking more often. And COVID, of course, showed that every newsroom needs to do fact-checking.”

Marie Richter, Managing Editor, NewsGuard Germany

In other countries, the need for debunking is no less crucial, but the answer in addressing this need has remained weak. Very few newsrooms in Romania publish debunking materials, and when they do, they prefer to address political statements. “The need for stable and reliable debunking initiatives is very high [in Romania]”, considers Codruța Simina. Moreover, the projects that deal with debunking in Romania are of three types: media, NGOs, and academic, such as LARICS, a project of the Institute of International Relations and Political Science of the Romanian Academy that analyses pro-Kremlin disinformation. LARICS also does debunking, but less oriented towards the form of journalistic content. Pro-Kremlin disinformation propagated through various channels is analysed, as well, by *Veridica.ro*, a media initiative that focuses on the entire Eastern European area.

In Hungary there is even an increasing need, says Katalin Erdélyi, an investigative journalist for *Átlátszó.hu*, due to the lack of criticism towards the government in

mainstream television (*MTVA*, *Hír TV*, *TV2*), or print and online media. As a result, the Hungarian news-portal *Átlátszó* has initiated a disinformation series: it collects and debunks weekly in Hungarian, the most popular fake news, and in English on a monthly basis.

“It is very important because most people believe without criticism everything and anything that the politicians or TV channels say, and our public service media (*MTVA*) is not public service, but just the mouthpiece of the ruling party, and the big TV channels like *Hír TV* and *TV2*, and every country newspaper and many other media (print and online) are owned by close associates of the government. They use a lot of disinformation lines coming from Russia, and many [use their] own ideas to lie about the opposition, the NGOs, the EU, the COVID-19 vaccines and everything that the government wants.”

Katalin Erdélyi, deputy editor-in-chief, *Átlátszó*

The propaganda or disinformation, which, according to the interviewees, is often sponsored by Russian money, has flooded the market through pro-government media, dominating the audiences in some countries. In the context of generalized disinformation, “the independent media outlets have to debunk, it is a part of informing people”, adds Katalin Erdélyi. Media should be in charge of debunking, as both Fernando Esteves and Marie Richter suggest. “Journalism must be made by journalists”, adds Fernando Esteves. Credible debunking is done by a third party, this is by someone that is neither the source nor the subject of false information. Thus, credible debunking can be done by journalists investigating facts independently. They have no interest in a story and can quote different sources, explains Marie Richter. Indeed, when asked to share a bad example of debunking, she remembered a case when a few journalists talked about a false story regarding Bill Gates and his involvement in the COVID-19 crisis, and the only debunking argument was that Bill Gates says the story was not true.

Yet, in some markets newsrooms simply lack the resources to effectively carry out fact-checking and debunking. Media professionals are simply too busy to take a supplementary task as a constant of their activity. For example, in the Czech Republic, there are reasons for the journalists' reticence in debunking: the lack of time and the scarcity of resources, time pressure on usually small teams of reporters, and conflicting professional goals, as reporters aim often to get either a good readership or fame, or both.

Dedicated web projects, NGOs and journalists or mainstream newsrooms do get involved in debunking, but the interviewees suggest that the government and the educational system should cooperate more for better results.

"If the media do the debunking, they won't be able to do what they are made for. They are made for informing people. How can private media fight Russian government money put into disinformation or propaganda campaigns? The state has to get involved [in debunking] by cooperating with other actors and, all hands together, educational programmes shall be made so that the people don't fall into traps of being disinformed."

Nikita Poljakov, editor-in-chief, *E15*

Also, social media platforms should do more to fight misinformation and disinformation, according to the interviewees. Algorithms that feed certain social circles of information increase the chances for people to get trapped in disinformation. Political content should be checked and confirmed. "People simply can't follow so many lies. When it concerns your ability to vote, to make democratic decision, I think that is serious enough to regulate it a little bit", Nikita Poljakov says. The interviewed journalists agree that it is hard to reach the same audience with the debunked information than with the original hoax. Disinformation has specific features that support fast and wide spreading: the pieces are short and emotionally narrated.

Consequently, the debunking process needs attention from inside the media industry, as certain members of the audience otherwise remain trapped in either

or both bubbles of disinformation and propaganda. Newsrooms should keep on debunking and should try to distribute the correct information as far as it is possible.

“The experience and a series of scientific studies show that debunking does not work for those who are followers of conspiracy theories or fakes, but rather are useful for creating communities resilient to fakes that learn information verification techniques and responsible/healthy consumption.”

Codruța Simina, Reporter, *PressOne* and Co-Founder, *Misreport*

Simina considers the most influential aspects that affect the debunking process are poor journalistic training and text writing. She also suggests that no matter who takes care of the debunking procedure, “it should be done following all the sets of criteria of ethics and journalistic deontology, as well as the editorial ones”. The debunking process should be coordinated by experienced journalists and editors and journalistic criteria should be applied in any form for combating false content. Nikita Poljakov, like the other journalists interviewed, supports this view:

“Disinformation ran fast but I don’t think it goes deeper. I know how good stories, good journalism can have huge potential and reachability. It’s about quality and content. There is a part of people who like fake news, they are fascinated by it. There is a huge group of people that like quality journalism and quality info.”

Nikita Poljakov, editor-in-chief, *E15*

Vital to democracy, effective fact-checking and debunking are, in the views of our five interviewees, a result of excellent journalism, paired with media literacy related public policies, implemented for people of all ages, and supported by tech companies and platform initiatives.

Education in the field of debunking

While some of our interviewees received specific training in combating disinformation, like Marie Richter and Codruța Simina, all agreed that learning by doing is essential. Self-taught, curiosity and scepticism are important. The situation Codruța Simina describes for Romania seems to be similar in all five countries. The debunking courses organised in Romania are, in general, few in number, and those who deliver them do not have practical experience, only their theoretical training. Simina says that according to her experience, journalism faculties generally offer theoretical training and, with few exceptions, very little practice relevant to the field. Simina explains that debunking is a marginal topic on the public agenda “except when politicians accuse each other of telling fake news about each other’s work, which in fact ridicules the work of journalists and debunking specialists”. She also considers that there is a great need for journalists with very good professional skills, but also a good mastery of ethics and deontology. Nikita Poljakov lectures about fake news at Charles University in Prague. In his view, the need for training is definitely greater. He considers that disinformation and debunking courses, at university level, should be paired with media literacy courses for children. Children should be taught about fake news from primary school onwards. “There should be some debate about media health – as they are basically empowered to protect democracy. [Media literacy is] as important as knowing where you live and who is your neighbour”, Nikita Poljakov adds.

Talking about special training for fact-checking and debunking, all the interviewees mentioned a general training for journalistic activities, paired with a special training to identify facts that can be verified (Marie Richter), a “need to understand the world they live in” for students (Fernando Esteves) and an on-the-job development of skills. They suggest that, in the future, technology and artificial intelligence (AI) would help journalists in the process of debunking, as AI runs faster and technology is now used to create false news (for example, in deep fake videos). Getting a job

related to fact-checking and debunking, after faculty graduation, is dependent on the size and the development of the market. While in Germany it might be easier to find a job in a fact-checking department due to the quantity of such specialized teams, in Portugal finding such work is very difficult, no matter how important this journalistic process is.

Debunking projects that have the chance to impose themselves and become a reference, both in terms of audience trust and audience reached, are those projects that will implement the fight against misinformation and false content “with established techniques of journalism and valuable writing and with an increased periodicity, which will provide consistency to the project”, concluded Codruța Simina. Consequently, journalism education should embrace an approach to debunking which considers its close linkages to interaction with the audience and media literacy.

Lessons learned - Insights gained

As diverse as the fields of journalism covered in our research might be, the interview results point to similar shortcomings in journalism education across both the fields and countries covered. Many of the journalists we talked to claimed to have acquired a great part of the skills and knowledge necessary for their respective specialization on-the-job and by self-education rather than through any formalized training, whether at universities or as further education. This holds true even for those fields, more firmly rooted in journalism practice, and those interviewees holding a degree in journalism or mass communication.

While it is important to note that our research is not representative of journalism education in the countries covered, the results may still help us to further outline our recommendations to improve training opportunities and adapt curricula. However, many interviewees point to a well-known difficulty for those who teach journalism: It is not easy to properly prepare for journalism practice in the classroom. Thus, we plead for practice-oriented and applied academic teaching of the fields covered, including courses with and by practitioners, field trips, internships, and practical projects.

At the same time, our findings suggest that theoretical knowledge – such as the awareness about the relevant developments in politics, economics and society underlying a given field – is still considered necessary for young professionals to become respected specialists in a certain field. This underlines the importance of there being a proper balance between theory and practice in journalism training and education, which is an enduring challenge for teachers and trainers.

Another challenge that remains is the speed at which innovation is happening in contemporary journalism, which one of our interviewees, Ioana Avădani from the Centre for Independent Journalism in Romania encapsulated: “Teachers at the university are frustrated that journalism is changing so rapidly that by the time

students graduate, their knowledge will be irrelevant”. Thus, journalism curricula arguably need to be more flexible than ever before.

Our research also marks the necessity for journalists to acquire more than just genuine reporting skills. Depending on the field, these may include data, software, and marketing skills, pointing towards the “hybridization” of journalism (see Splendore – Brambilla 2021). Arguably, these interdisciplinary skills are quite hard to implement in the institutional settings of university-based journalism education, which may often struggle to provide the facilities and expertise necessary for such an interdisciplinary framework, and need to hire, potentially expensive, external lecturers. Thus, innovation and thinking out-of-the-box is needed to adapt university-based journalism education to the constantly changing needs. Moreover, this research demonstrates a variety of ethical challenges related to innovations in journalism (see also Luengo – Herrero-Damas 2021). The interview results emphasise that ethical considerations should have their firm place in education, as many interviewees across fields stress.

In general, the development of the fields studied varies significantly between the countries covered, with technological and content innovations in newsrooms more widespread in some countries than in others. Most strikingly, this refers to the implementation of AI solutions and journalism through voice-assisted devices in newsrooms. In the latter field, the trend clearly follows the availability of voice solutions in national languages. Moreover, the institutionalization of debunking disinformation and fact-checking through specialized units seems to be much more widespread in Germany than in the other four countries.

These findings mirror the results of the first NEWSREEL project (see Part 1 of this book), pointing towards a “multi-speed Europe” in terms of innovative technologies, business models, or content reporting. While funding is a major cause for variations in speed, it is also important to stress the various political constraints which may limit innovation in countries such as Hungary, where media outlets independent of the government and its allies increasingly struggle to stay afloat – a trend reflected in

some other Central and Eastern European countries, too (e.g. Selva 2020; Schimpfössl et al. 2020). Thus, market opportunities for (young) professionals specialized in one of the fields may differ considerably not only depending on the field, but also from country to country. This needs to be considered when further assessing training needs and defining a reasonable scope of projected alterations in teaching journalism.

However, as already found during the first research conducted by our consortium (see Part 1 of this book), financial constraints do seem to limit the implementation of innovations in journalism education. Our interviewees also emphasise the difficulties in funding innovative ways of reporting in journalism practice ranging from a lack of money for implementing AI-driven solutions to scarce resources for field trips to cover migration and forced displacement or to realize cross-border reporting projects. Thus, alternative funding sources – such as grants from NGOs or foundations, crowdfunding and user donations, or media outlets being transformed into not-for-profit-organisations – seem a promising, yet ambivalent road towards more innovative reporting (see chapter on Improving Democratic Sensibility in this book; see also Ferrucci – Nelson 2019; Scott et al. 2019). Consequently, a constant, yet reasonable update of journalism education will also depend on the overall financial situation of the media market and journalism schools alike.

Collaboration may also be the chance to implement innovations despite scarce budgets. These may include cross-border collaboration between institutions of journalism education. Cooperating with those who practice journalism, on the other hand, will help to make academia more “important in the lifetime training of journalists”, as our interviewee Paulo Agostinho demands. With the collaborative work of our project consortium, we aim to provide resources for journalism training in Europe and beyond, supporting institutions involved in educating skilful reporters to keep pace with crucial innovations. Finally, but not least, we hope to set a benchmark in cross-border collaboration for journalism curricula.

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Annexes

Overview of analysed curricula (data collection 2017/2018)

Name of Institution / Name of Programme	University by type of funding	Degree Programme	Length of Programme	Number of students
Germany				
Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	50
Stuttgart Media University / Cross Media Journalism	Public	BA	7 semesters	19
Technical University of Dortmund / Science Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters plus one year traineeship	max. 17
Macromedia University of Applied Sciences Cologne / Journalism	Private	BA	7 semesters	ca. 27
University of Hamburg / Journalism and Communication Studies	Public	MA (consecutive)	4 semesters	32
Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz / Journalism	Public	MA (non-consecutive)	4 semesters	25

Entry Requirements	Founding Year	Number of Faculty Staff
Germany		
Numerus Clausus and two months internship before the beginning of the studies	2008 (the Bachelor study programme was preceded by the diploma degree programme which had been established in 1983)	3 professors, 9 research associates, 5 teaching staff members for special requirements, plus visiting lecturers
At least six weeks internship (or Volontariat / one-year freelancing) before enrolment	2001 (merger of two older education institutions)	11 for this programme, around 85 at the faculty "Electronic Media"
Numerus Clausus and six weeks internship or six months freelancing before programme start	2013 (study programme "Journalism" since 1976)	Ca. 30 academic staff members at the Institute for Journalism
Personal interview, work samples	2007	1 professor for journalism, participation of other professors from media management and design, participation of other lecturers
Above-average first degree in either journalism/communication studies or media studies with a social science emphasis, or a social science subject with a journalism/communication studies emphasis; eight weeks internship before beginning of the studies	1982/83: study programme "Journalism" as minor / 2001: study programme "Journalism and Communication Studies" as major and minor (Magister) / 2006: Master study programme "Journalism and Communication Studies"	3 professors, 3 research associates (plus visiting lecturers, ca. 3 per semester)
Academic degree, two-days qualifying examination	1978 foundation of faculty, 2002 start of current Master programme	26

Name of Institution / Name of Programme	University by type of funding	Degree Programme	Length of Programme	Number of students
Hungary				
Budapest Metropolitan University (METU) / Communication and Media Studies / Integrated Media specialization (<i>integrated</i>)	Private	BA	6 semesters	ca. 90 30-35 in the integrated media specialization
University of Debrecen / Communication and Media Studies / Journalism specialization (<i>integrated</i>)	Public	BA	6 semesters	20-22 with one third in the journalism specialisation
Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest / Communication and Media Studies / Journalism specialization (<i>integrated</i>)	Public	BA	6 semesters	ca. 60
Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest / Communication and Media Studies / Journalism (Print and Electronic Media) specialization (<i>integrated</i>)	Ecclesiastic	BA	6 semesters	ca. 50 / ca. 15 in the specialization
University of Pécs / Communication and Media Studies / Print and Electronic Press specialization (<i>integrated</i>)	Public	BA	6 semesters	20-25
University of Szeged / Communication and Media Studies / Electronic Press + Print Press + Media Informatics specialization (<i>separated</i>)	Public	BA	6 semesters	Ca. 60

Entry Requirements	Founding Year	Number of Faculty Staff
Hungary		
/	2006 start of programme at METU's predecessor, the Budapest Communication College (BKF); in 2015 BKF changed its name to Metropolitan, and in 2016 it obtained the title of University	9 full-time lecturers for the Institute of Communication plus more than 20 visiting lecturers
/	Mid-2000s	9 academic staff members at the department plus visiting lecturers
/	Specialization started in 2010	13 permanent staff members (mainly academics) at the department plus around 50 visiting lecturers per semester
/	Specialization started in 2014 (Faculty was founded in 1992, re-organised in 2012)	9 full-time lecturers for the Institute of Communication and Media plus visiting lecturers
/	Specialization started in 2010 (Faculty was founded in 1992)	11 academic staff members at the department plus visiting lecturers
/	1992	Ca. 10 permanent staff members (academic and media professionals) at the department plus more than 20 visiting lecturers

Name of Institution / Name of Programme	University by type of funding	Degree Programme	Length of Programme	Number of students
Portugal				
University Autónoma de Lisboa / Communication Sciences	Private	BA	6 semesters	n.a.
University of Beira Interior / Communication Sciences – Minor in Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	45
University of Minho / Communication Sciences – Minor in Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	67
Nova University of Lisbon / Communication Sciences – Minor in Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	95
University of Porto, Faculty of Arts and Humanities / Communication Sciences – Minor in Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	79
ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) / Journalism	Public	Post-graduate	2 semesters	20

Entry Requirements	Founding Year	Number of Faculty Staff
Portugal		
National exam in Philosophy, History or Portuguese	1989	26 teachers (some are in-house and others are external and working in areas like journalism)
National exam	1989	20 teachers
Numerus Clausus and national exam in either Geography, Mathematics or Portuguese	1991	28 teachers
Numerus Clausus and national exam in either Philosophy, Economy, History or Portuguese	1979 (first in Portugal)	30 teachers, most of them are in-house professors, but there are some guest professors as well
Numerus Clausus and national exam in Portuguese	2000	16 teachers
General culture test, interview and evaluation of CV	2013	19 teachers, more than half are journalists or other media professionals

Name of Institution / Name of Programme	University by type of funding	Degree Programme	Length of Programme	Number of students
Romania				
Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	80
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca / Journalism / Digital Media	Public	BA	6 semesters	196
University of Bucharest / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	125
Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	50
Spiru Haret University, Bucharest / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	100 (max. capacity)
Universitatea de Vest, Timișoara / Journalism	Public	BA	6 semesters	80

Entry Requirements	Founding Year	Number of Faculty Staff
Romania		
/	1989	Ca. 25
Motivation letter (1st stage) and baccalaureate GPA (2nd stage)	1995	16 plus collaborators
Written exam	1990	41 plus collaborators (ca. 20)
/	1992	Ca. 20
/	1991 (reorganised in 2005- 2006, 2008-2009, 2015)	24
/	1992	Ca. 20

List of interviewees

Interviewees connected to Part 1

JOURNALISM EDUCATORS	
Name	University / University Programme
GERMANY	
BRÜGGEMANN, Michael	University of Hamburg / Journalism and Communication Studies, MA
MEIER, Klaus	Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt / Journalism, BA
PRINZING, Marlis	Macromedia University of Applied Sciences Cologne (private) / Journalism, BA
RINSDORF, Lars	Stuttgart Media University / Cross Media Journalism, BA
SCHULTZ, Tanjev	Johannes Gutenberg University of Mainz / Journalism, MA
WORMER, Holger	Technical University of Dortmund / Science Journalism, BA
HUNGARY	
HAMMER, Ferenc	Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest / Communication and Media Studies, BA
KOVÁCS, Ákos	Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest / Communication and Media Studies, BA
MÉSZÁROS, Péter	University of Debrecen / Communication and Media Studies, BA
MURAI, András	Budapest Metropolitan University (private) / Communication and Media Studies, BA
PUSZTAI, Bertalan	University of Szeged / Communication and Media Studies, BA
SZIJÁRTÓ, Zsolt	University of Pécs / Communication and Media Studies, BA
SZIRÁK, Péter	University of Debrecen / Communication and Media Studies, BA

JOURNALISM EDUCATORS Name	University / University Programme
PORTUGAL	
BASTOS, Helder	University of Porto / FLUP, Communication Sciences, BA
CARDOSO, Gustavo	University Institute of Lisbon – ISCTE / Journalism, Post-graduation
CARVALHEIRO, José Ricardo	University of Beira Interior / Communication Sciences, BA
GRANADO, António	Nova University of Lisbon / Communication Sciences, BA
LOPES, Paula	University Autónoma of Lisbon / Science Communication Department, BA
SANTOS, Luís António	University of Minho / Communication Sciences, BA
ROMANIA	
ABRUDAN, Elena	Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca / Journalism//Digital Media, BA
CLITAN, Gheorghe	Universitatea de Vest (West University), Timișoara / Journalism, BA
HASMAȚUȚHI, Gabriel	Lucian Blaga University, Sibiu / Journalism, BA
LĂZESCU, Alexandru	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University, Iași / Journalism, BA
RADU, Raluca	University of Bucharest / Journalism, BA
ȘERBAN, Silviu Constantin	Spiru Haret University, Bucharest / Journalism, BA

JOURNALISTS Name	Roles and workplace (<i>media outlets in italics</i>)
GERMANY	
KÖPPEN, Ulrike	Head of the data journalism team of the regional broadcaster <i>Bayerischer Rundfunk</i> (BR Data)
OBERMAYER, Bastian	Head of investigations at the daily national newspaper <i>Süddeutsche Zeitung</i> (SZ), who also led the Panama Papers investigation in cooperation with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ)
RADÜ, Jens	Head of multimedia at the weekly news magazine <i>Der Spiegel</i>
SCHRAVEN, David	Experienced journalist, founder and currently publisher of the investigative research network <i>Correctiv</i>
TIMCKE, Marie-Louise	Head of the interactive team at the regional newspaper <i>Berliner Morgenpost</i> (MoPo) and president of the data journalists' network Journocode
HUNGARY	
BABOS, Attila	Experienced journalist, co-founder of <i>Szabad Pécs</i> , an independent county news site
BÁTORFY, Attila	Data journalist of the watchdog NGO and first non-profit centre for investigative journalism <i>Átlátszó</i> , teaches journalism courses at two universities in Budapest
DUDÁS, Gergely	Former editor in chief of <i>Index</i> , one of the largest Hungarian news portals; about to launch <i>politis.hu</i>
VORÁK, Anita	Prize-winning investigative journalist, working with the non-profit investigative journalism centre <i>Direkt36</i>
WEYER, Balázs	Chairman of the <i>Editor-in-Chief's Forum</i> , an NGO for editors and journalists that aims to raise, and keep safe, professional standards, journalism ethics, responsibility and transparency; guest lecturer at several universities

JOURNALISTS Name	Roles and workplace (<i>media outlets in italics</i>)
PORTUGAL	
ALBUQUERQUE, Raquel	Data journalist, worked for <i>Público</i> , currently with the weekly <i>Expresso</i>
BRANCO, Sofia	Prize-winning journalist, president of the Portuguese journalists' union, currently working for the news agency <i>LUSA</i>
OLIVEIRA, Paula	Editor at <i>TVI</i> television and <i>Media Capital Digital</i> online operations
PENA, Paulo	Prize-winning journalist, formerly working for <i>Visão</i> magazine and <i>Público</i> , part of the collaborative project Investigate Europe
RODRIGUES, Elisabete	Founder and editor-in-chief of the online newspaper <i>Sul Informação</i> ; experienced journalist, journalism educator and lecturer at the University of Algarve
ROMANIA	
IONESCU, Răzvan	Editor-in-chief of <i>Recorder.ro</i> , an online, private video journalism enterprise
LUPȘA, Cristian	Editor-in-chief of <i>Decât o Revistă</i> , a private narrative journalism-based magazine
MARINESCU, Dan	Editor-in-chief of <i>Adevărul</i> , a private mainstream newspaper, print & online
NICOLA, Ilie	General producer, news, for <i>Digi24</i> , an all-news, private television
ROMAN, Augustin	Head of <i>Digital Antena Group</i> , a private media conglomerate
ULMANU, Monica	Visual journalist with the <i>Washington Post</i>

Interviewees connected to Part 2

Name Country	Roles and workplace (<i>media outlets in italics</i>)
STORYTELLING IN SOCIAL MEDIA	
BARBONIE, Oana Romania	Journalist and visual editor of <i>Decât o Revistă</i> , an independent online magazine
CSENGEL, Karina Hungary	Head of social media team at <i>Mérce</i> , an independent news portal
OLIVEIRA, Paula Portugal	Editor at TVI television and <i>Media Capital Digital</i> online operations
ŠIMEČEK, Ondřej Czech Republic	News editor at <i>Česká televize</i> (Czech TV), Brno regional office of PSM
WEINHOLD, Patrick Germany	Journalist, leading editor and head of social media at <i>ARD Tagesschau</i> , PSM
GRAPHIC JOURNALISM	
BARBONIE, Oana Romania	Journalist and visual editor at <i>Decât o Revistă</i> , an independent online magazine
BOČEK, Jan Czech Republic	Data journalist at <i>Český rozhlas</i> (Czech Radio), PSM
HALLING, Axel Germany	Programme manager, co-founder and board member German Comics Association, independent
SOUSA, Gabriel Portugal	Web designer and illustrator of <i>Público</i> , an independent print and online newspaper
VINCZE, Ferenc Hungary	Editor-in-chief and scriptwriter at <i>Szépirodalmi Figyelő</i> , an independent literary magazine
IMPROVING DEMOCRATIC SENSIBILITY	
AGOSTINHO, Paulo Portugal	Editor for Foreign and Portuguese Speaking Countries Desk at <i>Lusa News Agency</i> , funding partly state and partly private
AVĂDANI, Ioana Romania	Executive director of Centre for Independent Journalism in Bucharest, an independent training and advocacy institution
HOLCOVÁ, Pavla Czech Republic	Investigative journalist of <i>investigace.cz</i> , an independent platform and founder of Investigative Reporting Centre (IRC)
PETHŐ, András Hungary	Co-founder and editor of <i>Direkt36</i> , an independent investigative reporting centre

Name Country	Roles and workplace (<i>media outlets in italics</i>)
SACHSE, Jonathan Germany	Co-founder of independent non-profit investigative newsroom <i>Correctiv</i> and manager of <i>Correctiv.Lokal</i>
COVERING MIGRATION	
AMBERGER, Julia Germany	Freelance journalist reporting on e.g. Africa and migration issues
LINDNER, Tomáš Czech Republic	Editor, Foreign Issues of <i>Respekt</i> , an independent weekly news magazine
NEUBERGER, Eszter Hungary	Editor of <i>444.hu</i> , an independent news portal
SANTOS, Catarina Portugal	Editor of <i>Observador</i> , an independent online newspaper
FOREIGN COVERAGE	
ALEXANDRE, Ricardo Portugal	Deputy director & Foreign Affairs editor of <i>TSF</i> , an independent news radio broadcaster
AVRAMESCU, Ramona Romania	Senior correspondent at the Romanian Presidency, special correspondent to the US during the 2020 presidential elections at <i>TVR</i> , PSM
FÖLDES, András Hungary	Video Journalist covering mostly international issues at <i>Telex.hu</i> , an independent news site
GAVRILĂ, Carmen Romania	Foreign Affairs correspondent at <i>Radio România</i> , PSM
ŘEZNÍČEK, Martin Czech Republic	Deputy editor-in-chief of news, former US correspondent and chief international correspondent of <i>Česká televize</i> (Czech TV), PSM
SCHUMANN, Harald Germany	Investigative journalist and editor of <i>Der Tagesspiegel</i> , an independent print press, co-founder of Investigate Europe, an independent cross-border collaborative network
JOURNALISM FOR VOICE-ACTIVATED ASSISTANTS AND DEVICES	
ANDRIESCU, Vlad Romania	Editor-in-chief of <i>start-up.ro</i> , an independent online journal about digital start-ups in Romania
DÖMÖS, Zsuzsanna Hungary	Technology journalist of <i>24.hu</i> , an independent news site

Name Country	Roles and workplace (<i>media outlets in italics</i>)
JAVŮREK, Adam Czech Republic	Analyst of <i>Český rozhlas</i> (Czech Radio), PSM
LAGE, Miguel Portugal	Owner and digital innovator of Euroconsumers, an NGO for consumer rights
AI AND JOURNALISM, ROBOT JOURNALISM AND ALGORITHMS	
ANDRIESCU, Vlad Romania	Editor-in-chief of <i>Start-up.ro</i> , an independent online journal about digital start-ups in Romania
BARROS, Rui Portugal	Data journalist of <i>Público</i> , an independent print and online newspaper
DÖMÖS, Zsuzsanna Hungary	Technology journalist of <i>24.hu</i> , an independent news site
KÜHNE, Steffen Germany	Tech lead for AI + Automation Lab of <i>Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR)</i> , PSM
MATESOVÁ MARKOVÁ, Radka Czech Republic	Editor-in-chief of <i>Česká tisková kancelář, ČTK</i> (Czech News Agency), Public Service Agency
ANALYSING AND VERIFYING FAKE NEWS	
PENA, Paulo Portugal	Prize-winning journalist, formerly working for <i>Visão</i> magazine and <i>Público</i> , part of the collaborative project Investigate Europe
TUREA, Adriana Romania	Journalist, specialized in medical journalism at <i>Radio România</i> , PSM
TVRDOŇ, Jan Czech Republic	Editor, <i>Deník N</i> , Independent journal
WESOLOWSKI, Kathrin Germany	Freelance journalist, working for fact-checking department at <i>Deutsche Welle</i> , PSM
DEBUNKING DISINFORMATION	
ERDÉLYI, Katalin Hungary	Deputy editor-in-chief and investigative journalist of <i>Átlátszó</i> , an independent NGO-driven investigative news portal
ESTEVEZ, Fernando Portugal	Founder and director of <i>Polígrafo</i> , an independent fact-checking website
POLJAKOV, Nikita Czech Republic	Editor-in-chief of <i>E15.cz</i> , an independent business news daily
RICHTER, Marie Germany	Managing editor of NewsGuard (Germany), an international company analysing and rating news websites on journalistic criteria

Professional journalists must compete with non-professional or even deliberately manipulated news; they must be reliable and trustworthy sources of news amidst contemporary information chaos and acquire the indispensable ability to make creative and responsible use of digital tools. In the last five years, the authors of this volume have been working hard to create innovative teaching methods and learning materials for the next generation of journalists in the framework of two Strategic Partnership Projects of the European Union. The researchers and lecturers who contributed to this book are from the Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Portugal, and Romania. The book's content is the result of their research, focusing on specific journalistic fields. Some of them are mainly related to technological developments (like data journalism or artificial intelligence and journalism, robot journalism and algorithms), while others are connected to the social role of journalism (like ethical challenges of the digital public sphere or covering migration); these aspects are strongly intertwined in practice. The volume is recommended to everyone interested in the current trends of European journalism, but primarily to media and journalism students and lecturers. Furthermore, it can be applied as a part of journalistic courses in Higher Educational Institutions.

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