

Jean Monnet Chair of European Media Governance and Integration

Aims of the transfer activity

The aim of the Jean Monnet Chair of European Media Governance and Integration is to stimulate research, generate publications and disseminate learning with a focus on regulatory, policy and social deployment strategy scenarios at the intersection of European media and communications rights and integration; to stimulate interest in European integration and communication governance among students in Central and South East Europe with new courses in European Media Governance Studies; to facilitate and curate public debates for multi-stakeholders on the challenges of the governance of the EU and its role in communication and culture in the light of crises and challenges to the European Project to enhance regional cooperation through exchange between higher education institutions, media industries and policymakers; to enhance professional skills in EU integration.

Person(s) responsible for the project

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Katharine Sarikakis

Affiliation of the transfer activity at the University of Vienna

Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Communication, Media Governance and Industries Research Lab

Project runtime

2016 - 2019

Funding

European Union Erasmus+



Contact person

Olga Kolokytha, PhD MA (olga.kolokytha@univie.ac.at)

Cooperation partners from outside of the University

Media and press outlets; professional organizations of press and of journalists

Project description

Understanding the ways in which European integration has reflected developments in the governance of media and cultural spaces in the continent, the role of European institutions in shaping mediascapes and the impact of constitutional and institutional change in the EU to respond to citizens' political demands are three core areas of research, teaching and public debate led by Prof. Sarikakis and the Media Governance Lab. This work focuses on recent European history in the light of actual and perceived crises: financial, migration, EU membership, and legitimacy of governance. The study of and debate about the extraordinary challenges to European integration faced by EU institutions and citizens today are urgently in need of systematic study and public understanding. The Chair aims to

a) Expand and deepen research informed and real world activated teaching in European integration by drawing attention to the significance and role of media, communication and culture, both as structural conditions and as legal conditions in the project of unification: it connects areas which

have proven to be at the core of the public's and experts' debate about European integration, but which have remained rather at the sidelines of Jean Monnet action. These areas are increasingly gaining media and policy recognition for their importance in guaranteeing (or challenging) the *raison d'être* of the EU, the legitimacy of its institutional handling and its internal and external relations, as well as its standing as a guarantor of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

b) Offer in-depth understanding of the challenges imposed on the EU and the ways in which it responds to them at 3 levels: citizen level and democracy, state level and process, international level as a policy actor. Across these three levels, we will explore the emerging and pressing dimensions of freedom of press, privacy/surveillance, and media ownership on their impact on democracy, legitimacy, participation, social cohesion, migration and sustainability vis a vis extended periods of crises.

Integration of the transfer-activity in academic teaching

The Chair is involved in teaching two postgraduate courses with the aim to expand the student pool in the country and the region and to provide training in skills for young, emerging and retraining professionals. The courses involve a masters level course on Media freedom and European Integration: rights, principles and Scope as a Research Seminar of 10 ECTS. This course will be offered as an English speaking course to enable the participation of visiting students, ERASMUS students and to help German native language speakers to expand their skills in debating European Union and Media Governance issues in international terms. The course will explore the policies and principles behind the protection of media freedom in Europe as cornerstones of the building of a European Union enjoying legitimacy and democratic processes. The course will apply archive and document analysis; historical methods and analysis; interviewing; comparative analysis of indicators of media freedom and analysis of datasets such as Eurobarometer, Eurostat, Public Opinion and World Value Survey, and policy analysis. The course will explore specific dimensions with different foci each year, from the proposed list and in conjunction with EU activities in the field (Audiovisual Directive, Copyright legislation, Public Service Media etc.) to ensure accuracy and timeliness of the course. The second course is designed as a PhD level course on theoretical and analytical dimensions of trajectory of the European integration and levels of media freedom, in particular in times of crisis. This course will explore the relationship between mediated debate and public policy on the governance of crisis on three specific historical moments: financial crisis, migration crisis and EU membership. The course Europe, Media and Crises: politics and publics of 5 ECTS will aim to address the often overlooked factor of public sentiment and mobilization in the making of Europe, as forces of governance both at the integration level and media freedom levels. PhD students are not only emerging academics but also professionals in the fields of Media, Public Administration, Advocacy, Officers with the International Organizations based in Vienna such as the UN and Embassies.

Results/Impact

Push the boundaries of thinking and researching in what is often a stale debate on European media policies Students and professionals will be able to

- critically assess the ways in which media reporting affects understandings of Europe
- interrogate the relation of media and public policy
- explore contestations of European integration in times of crises
- compare such to approaches to integration in non-crisis times
- understand and critically analyze the role of the media in European crises
- connect the structural impediments on free reporting in Europe
- critically interrogate the quality and visions of European integration
- understand and explore the active role of the public across Europe in forming visions of integration.

Transfer aspect of the activity

All activities are open to civil society with the exception of the formal courses. Civil society organizations will be invited to the workshop and the public event; they will also be invited to

contribute to the dedicated blog. Pedagogically, the method followed is a combination of one way “transmission” of information, structured guidance and the Socratic enquiry, in that students are led to deepen their study through a series of research questions that challenge preconceived ideas but also allow for the discovery of new theoretical and empirical patterns. Original research is always the basis of the teaching.

Achievement of objectives

On an annual basis, the proposed work program consists of

- 2 full graduate courses, addressed at students not only in Austria but in the region of central and South East Europe (SEM 1, all years; SEM 2 All years)
- 1 outreach course “Rapid Workshop” (SEM 1 All years)
- 1 major public event (SEM 2 All years S)
- 2 didactic publications (SEM 1 and 2 All years)
- 1 academic publication (edited special journal issue 2018)
- online publications ie communications (All years throughout)

The aim of this workplan is to address a wide range of stakeholders through higher education courses for formally enrolled students, in English, so as to achieve maximum reach and attract them from neighboring countries and an event for professionals that wish to gain experience and skills in current media policy related issues in the EU. The public event is designed to bring to the public a lively debate about the EU and the place of communications. Further, the designed publications aim to provide additional and more permanent support and exposure of issues. Preparation for these events will be supported by additional Lab members to help the Chair provide a full program for students; professionals; the public.

Measures for a longer-term realization

All teaching activities, including the “rapid workshop” will be controlled through monitoring mechanisms of feedback with participants at the beginning, middle and after the completion of the courses. There are specific university set quality control feedback systems and they will be combined with tailor made feedback opportunities for the specific Jean Monnet activities. Publication quality control will be achieved at first through in house peer review and editing, as well under the research and academic direction of content by Prof. Sarikakis. The Media Governance Lab consists of members with long experience in academic but also media publishing and experts of regulatory experience.

Visibility of the transfer activity

The dissemination strategy of the project is designed to address a wide variety of stakeholders, namely students, academics, professionals/ policy-makers, civil society and the general public and it is planned to take place through online and physical channels, such as for example academic channels, the Media Governance and Industries website and the press, as well use of social media and distribution lists of learned societies and professional organizations. Summaries of the teaching activities as well as information on the public event will be presented through the Lab’s website. A dedicated Blog will be operated throughout the duration of the program, supported by the Lab’s social media activity ie twitter for further dissemination and dialogue. Press releases and press kits will be prepared for the public events, aimed at a wide range of audiences, as mentioned above. The Chair also plans to organize special panels in international conferences of learned societies such as for example the International Communication Association (ICA) conference, the International Association for Media and Communication (IAMCR) to disseminate the findings of the report to scholarly circles. It is also envisaged to pursue relevant academic publications to enhance understandings of the significance of the report and its impact, and publicize in the media- press in Europe through the Chair’s excellent relations with the international media sector. Teaching and research material will be used in future teachings and seminars of the Media Governance and Industries Research Lab, as well as in seminars and guest lectures outside the University of Vienna.

Webpage/Publications

Jean Monnet Chair of European Media Governance and Integration

<http://mediagovernance.univie.ac.at/jean-monnet-chair/>

<http://www.sarikakis.info>

Keywords

European integration; media governance; awareness of the role of the EU; European citizenry