

ON, INFO  
CORE

THE ROLE OF MEDIA  
IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

[illegible]

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: MEDIA AND PUBLICS

How to cite this paper:

[illegible]

[www.infocore.eu/results/](http://www.infocore.eu/results/)

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: MEDIA AND PUBLICS (EXECUTIVE SUMMARY)

In line with INFOCORE's Description of Work (DoW), the overall objective of WP3 is to explore (1) how different media publics use and interpret available information and (2) how this information influences their perceptions and evidential beliefs about a conflict. Media publics will be therefore analyzed, on the one hand, in their role as lay media users ('receivers') of conflict-related news information who we define here as individuals who do not hold official positions in the government, do not belong to governing bodies of political parties and do not execute positions of managing bodies of NGOs in the field of media, peace building or conflict resolution. On the other hand, we will look into the role these lay actors play as 'media active lay publics' ('producers') in the process of conflict news production. The latter will be achieved by investigating the interaction between media active lay publics and (a) different types of media in (b) different types of conflicts and (c) at different stages of conflict. 'Media active lay publics' are understood as one of the key "actors that play an active role in shaping media coverage."<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis of WP3 is consequently put on both *interpretations* media publics draw from conflict related news and their *interactions* with the media.. This demands an application of a qualitative research strategy (focused group interviews) to be used in the case of four conflict countries (Macedonia, Kosovo, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo). The focus on studying interpretative frames is based on the presumption that these further shape ideas, attitudes and behavior of lay publics and influence their interaction with the media or the community both in a constructive and destructive way. In three conflict cases (Macedonia, Israel/Palestine, Syria) WP3 will also investigate the perceptions of the audience about the conflict by using a quantitative research strategy (telephone and face-to-face surveys).

At this point it has to be emphasized that we won't be able to study comprehensively the influences of conflict related coverage on media audiences. As stipulated in the DoW, WP3's objectives are more precisely (1) to assess the "backgrounds and needs" of lay publics in conflict areas to help identifying "access points and strategies" for media assistance programs, (2) to examine "media use patterns and routines" of media lay publics in different conflict stages, (3) to analyze the lay public's "perception of other actors involved in the news production process" (e.g. journalists, political actors, NGOs), (4) to identify "patterns of interaction" between media lay publics and "other actors involved in the news production process", (5) to delineate the "main impacts of conflict news production" upon the media lay publics' "information about, perceptions of attitudes toward and actions within a conflict" and (6) to determine the role of media active lay publics in the news production process and dissemination.<sup>2</sup> While in the cases of Burundi, the DRC, Syria and Israel/Palestine all objectives (1)-(6) will be considered in the research design, we will specifically focus on objective (6), the role of 'media active lay publics' in news production and dissemination, in the cases of Macedonia and Kosovo.

---

1 Original application: INFOCORE, financed under the Seventh Framework Programme, Work Programme: SSH.2013.4.2-1. Media in conflicts and peace building, pp. 3, 10.

2 See Description of Work (DoW), Work package 3, p. 11.

## CONTENTS

<b>Research Design</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Research design (Macedonia, Kosovo)</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Sampling strategy.....	7
Research questions .....	8
Data analysis .....	8
<b>Research design (Burundi, DRC)</b> .....	<b>9</b>
Sampling strategy.....	10
Organization of focus groups.....	10
Research questions .....	11
<b>Research design (Syria)</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Sampling strategy.....	12
Research questions .....	13
<b>Research design (Israel, Palestine)</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Sampling strategy.....	13
Research questions .....	14
<b>Research ethics</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>16</b>
 <b>Annexes:</b> .....	 <b>17</b>
Information and Consent (English) .....	17
Consent Form (English).....	19
Information and Consent (French) .....	20
Consent Form (French).....	22

## METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK: MEDIA AND PUBLICS

Various types of conflicts and at different phases of escalation may bring various degrees of control on (or damage to) the media system in afflicted areas. Large-scale violence makes reliable information a scarce commodity, and this is true regardless of the kind of control on the ground. In a world where social phenomena, political movements, economic realities, conflicts etc. are increasingly mediatized (Cottle, 2006) it is of great importance both to understand media use patterns and habits of 'lay publics' in the search for information in conflict situations and to raise the issue of the involvement of what is here theorized as 'media active lay publics' in the process of conflict news production. The theoretical framework of the latter is founded in the tradition of Weberian Sociology (Weber, 1978) in the sense that it aims to interpret to greatest level possible, the *meaning* actors give to social actions. More specifically, it deals with the way how media active lay publics' involve in the process of news production and how their interpretations of news content change over the course of the conflict.

We make a distinction between the concepts of Audience, Lay publics and Media Active Lay Publics. *First*, we differentiate between *Audiences* and *Lay Publics* on the basis of four criteria: [i] self-imagination and group-self-awareness (Anderson 2006); [ii] orientation towards the other as 'sociation' (Weber 1978); [iii] construction and formation in society (McQuail 2005); and [iv] existence of an emerging agenda for action (Tenenboim-Weinblatt 2013). The theoretical elaboration of these criteria is given in detail in the conceptual framework (Micevski 2014). We conceptualize *Lay Publics* as those segments of the audience that perceive and imagine themselves as members of a particular value or issue specific group that are oriented towards the other in terms of 'sociation', that are founded in society, and that construct emerging agenda for action.

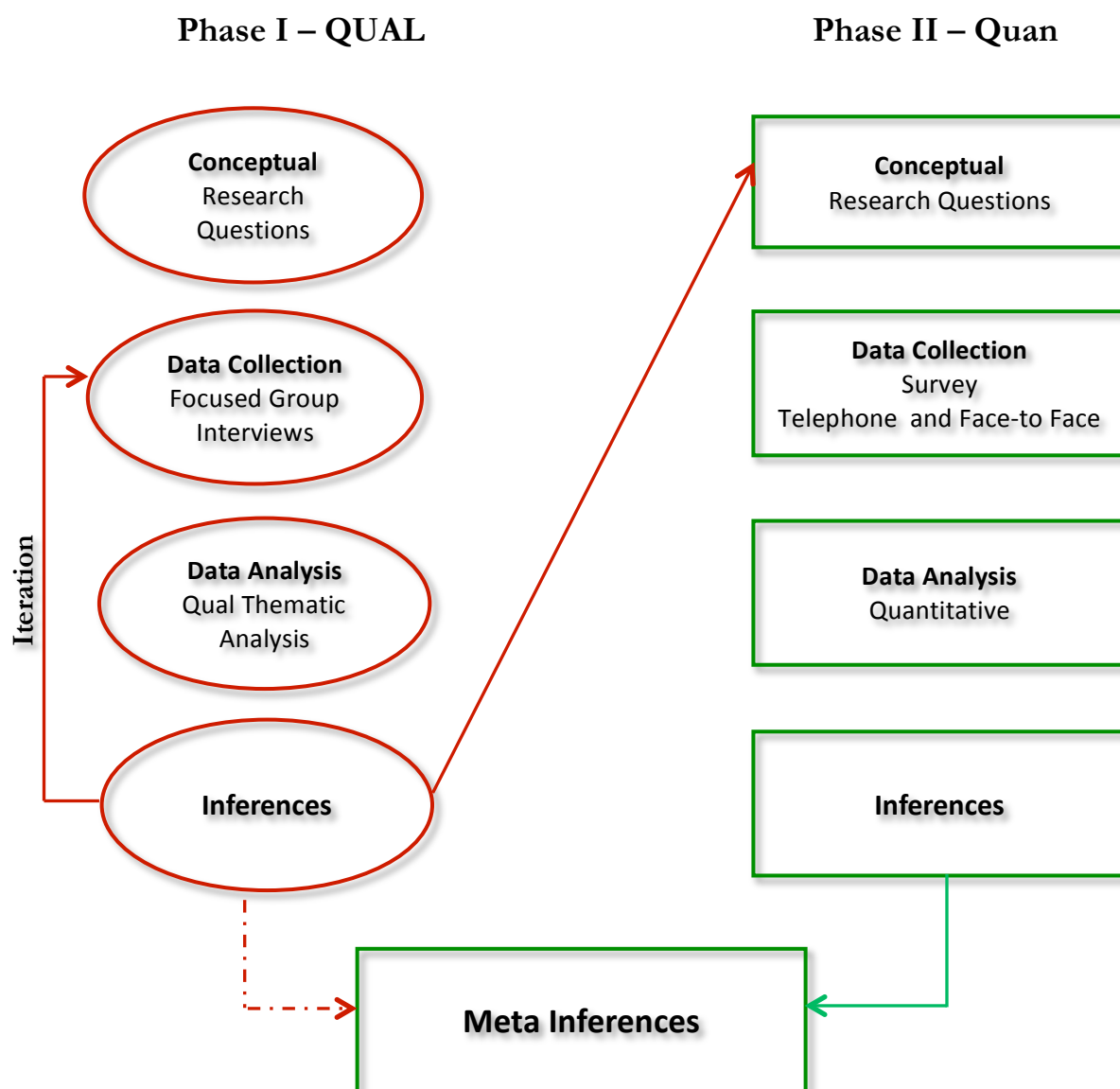
*Secondly*, we differentiate between *Lay Publics* and *Media Active Lay Public*. The key criterion here is whether the Lay Publics are in fact *active in the media* – whether they write or broadcast (blogs, fb posts, comments, call journalists etc.) to advance their emerging agenda. Lay Publics may have all four criteria (self-imagined, sociated, founded in society and brewing with an emerging agenda for action) but they may construct them in a face to face communication. However one part of the Lay Publics may engage in *content production*. They are the Media Active Lay Publics. They would not be journalists as journalists would be dependent upon a media structure or would be bounded by a clear code of professional conduct as the freelance journalists - (citizen journalists are not really journalists). It may very well be that all members of the Lay Public concerned with a certain issue are in fact Media Active Lay Publics – but this distinction is necessary for analytical purposes – to leave margin for a part of the Lay Publics that would not engage through the mass media or social networks, but would find another way of expression. Hence, the segment of the Lay Publics that repeatedly engages in content production through variety of platforms will be regarded as the *Media Active Lay Publics*.

In other words we endeavor to investigate the (a) interpretations and key interactions between different audience segments, primarily 'lay publics' or, in the cases of Macedonia and Kosovo 'media

active lay publics’, and (b) different types of media in (c) different types of conflicts and (d) at different stages of conflict. By (a) *interpretations and key interactions* we mean on one hand the interpretative processes members of various audience segments employ to make sense and construct meanings of the discursive nexus encompassing conflict news; and on the other hand, the patterns of infusing information back into the news content. The concept of interpretative frames is central in this respect and it is concerned with the meaning of media messages: Baden (2010) integrates several theorized aspects of the concept of *frames* into a coherent definition. Drawing on the notions on ‘selectivity’ (Entman, 1993) by which frames ‘select specific aspects of reality to construct meaning’; ‘coherence’ (Gamson & Modigliani, 1987) as frames connect aspects of reality in a certain fashion; and drawing on the notion of ‘purposefulness’ (Benford & Snow, 2000) by which frames ‘imply specific interpretations, evaluations, or courses of action’, he defines the frame as a ‘contextualization that situates a specific claim within a selective, coherent, purposeful interpretative context’ (Baden, 2010). INFOCORE WP3 operates within this definition but it puts an emphasis on the frames that are *decoded* from the media messages and the meaning that the audiences and more specifically ‘media active lay publics’ bring back to the process of news production. Furthermore, we investigate this process across (b) *different types of media* – both traditional media outlets and new media available in certain conflict zones on a variety of Internet platforms which can be utilized to convey messages and to draw information from. While taking into account the complexity and variety of possible factors underlining conflicts, it can be claimed that the multiplication of inflammatory media discourses can prove an important stimulus for violence escalation (Georgievski & Trpevska 2008; Frère, 2007); also, it can be assumed that the construction of narratives of peace may provide an important incentive for de-escalation (Wolfsfeld, 2004; Hanitzsch, 2007). This communication complexity is addressed across (c) *different types of conflicts*. We hold that conflicts should neither be understood in a narrow military sense so as to exclude so much of the political, social or economic processes underpinning them; nor should they be defined too widely so as to incorporate just about any dispute between groups. *Conflict phases* (d) are important as the roles of the variety of actors in the conflict news production and the perceptions change over time and in correlation with the intensity of violence or the attempts for political resolution.

## Research Design

On the level of the entire WP3 we use a mixed method research design composed of two strands: QUALitative (in Macedonia, Kosovo, Burundi and Democratic Republic of Congo) and Quantitative (in Macedonia, Israel/Palestine and Syria). Macedonia is the only conflict case where we apply both qualitative and quantitative strategy. In the qualitative strand, we are going to conduct two to three waves of focused group interviews in different time periods. In the quantitative strand we will conduct surveys: in Syria - telephone survey, administered through a careful process of selecting the interviewees by purposive snowball sampling, in Palestine (face-to-face survey being the only option), in Israel and Macedonia conduct telephone surveys.



There were several objective constraints that did not allow for full application of both qualitative and quantitative methods in each conflict case: (1) the low penetration of specific communication technologies in some countries; (2) the overall stage of the conflict in the country and difficult conditions for conducting field research; and (3) the limited resources for doing audience research which is usually very complex and expensive.

#### Research design (Macedonia, Kosovo)

In the case of Macedonia qualitative and quantitative research approaches are applied in multiple strands. The qualitative strand (two waves of focused group interviews) precedes the quantitative strand (telephone survey), but the third qualitative wave is conducted after the completion of the telephone survey. In Kosovo, only focused group interviews will be conducted in three different waves.

Focus group discussions – the focused interview – is the widely used research method within the tradition of cultural studies for studying the ways in which the people in conjunction with one another

extract/construe the meaning from the messages. We will implement this *qualitative method* in Macedonia/Kosovo to isolate divergent interpretations of the media coverage of specific events and to juxtapose those interpretations to the frames embedded in the specific media ‘discourse’. Also, while qualitatively analyzing group discussion we will search for group dynamics (argumentative and complementary interaction) that brings about an *emerging agenda for action*.

The overall INFOCORE conceptual framework defines *agendas for actions* as “prospective discursive constructions that postulate specific goals which must still be achieved” (Tenenboim-Weinblatt, 2013). For the purpose of WP3 *emerging agenda for action* entails (1) a verbal/written manifestation of the intent to act for the change of current state of affairs; (2) a general idea of a desirable situation; and (3) an action undertaken towards building a consensus on achieving it. By ‘activity’ we consider engaging with the media in the name of an *emerging agenda for action*, not in the sense of audience’s choice of programmes.

We will investigate how media active lay publics interpret the news related to the selected events (or a chain of events) and how they interact with different types of media. Examples of media texts and recordings will be shown to the focus groups participants before they discuss the respective media coverage. In this stage, we will search for interpretative frames which are used by the media publics while they draw meaning from the conflict related coverage. In the last thematic session we will focus on the ways the media active lay publics use/interact with different types of media and on the agendas for action that might emerge from the respective media coverage.

During the *quantitative stage* (telephone survey), we will try to extrapolate the patterns of interaction with the media and civic engagement at the level of entire media audiences in order to see how these patterns are spread across different segments of audiences and to draw some generalizations. We will also examine the perceptions and attitudes of the different audience segments about the media coverage of the actual conflict.

### *Sampling strategy*

In the *qualitative stage*, purposive (snowball) sampling will be applied. Participants of the three waves of focus groups will be recruited to encompass different media active lay publics, by using several criteria:

- individuals who regularly read/watch/listen to most relevant media in the respective conflict zone;
- individuals who do not hold official positions in the central or local government, do not belong to governing bodies of political parties and who are not holding executing positions or are members of managing bodies of NGOs in the field of media and peace building and conflict resolution;
- individuals who have had experience in interaction with the media (with comments on the Web portals, letters to editors, participating in contact current-affair radio and TV programs, commenting on the social networks, blogging etc.). in relation to the specific conflict issues that have been identified as key conflict events in the selected period;



- individuals who engage in the media producing their own content (do not include liking on FB, reposting of someone else's content etc.).

Each wave will consist of four focus groups and each group will consist of seven to eight members. Gender, age, educational level, ethnical/religious background and location (urban/rural regions) will be taken into consideration, depending on the structure of the population in each conflict zone.

In the *quantitative stage*, the target population (universe) for the telephone survey will be the population in Macedonia age 16 to 65. A probability-based sample (of around 1.100 respondents) will be created, on the basis of the data gathered from the Census conducted in 2004. A randomized process for selecting individuals will be applied (Random Digit Dial telephone sampling). The survey will be conducted by an external research agency which will be contracted following a specified procedure.

#### *Research questions*

The following general research questions have to be answered within the WP3 for Macedonia/Kosovo, by using different research methods for data collection and data analysis:

##### *1) Qualitative strand:*

- How do the members of media active lay publics interpret the conflict related news?
- What interpretative frames emerge through the process of meaning creation?
- What are the *emerging agendas for action* that the lay publics create during the interpretation of conflict related news?
- What types of *inter(action)* with the media follow from the collectively constructed emerging agendas for action with regard to different conflict issues and events?

##### *2) Quantitative strand:*

- What are the *patterns of media use* among different audience segments?
- What are the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of audiences about the specific conflict related coverage?
- What *types of interaction* do different audience segments practice *with different types of media*?
- Which *audience segments have been inter(active) with the media* in relation to the key conflict issues and significant events?

#### *Data analysis*

Discussion from the *focus groups* will be recorded and transcribed subsequently. The focus of the analysis will be on both argumentative and complementary interaction among members and the processes whereby meaning is collectively constructed. Qualitative analyses of the transcribed discussion will be applied. The central process in the qualitative analysis will be 'coding' which will consist of careful



reviewing of transcripts at three different levels: *open coding* (breaking down, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data), *axial coding* (data are put back together in new ways, by making connections between categories) and *selective coding* (selecting core category, relating it to other categories, validating relationships refinement of categories and development of a theory).

Data gathered with the *telephone surveys* will be analyzed quantitatively, by using the techniques of statistical analysis – univariate, bivariate and multivariate analysis. The research questions which will presuppose correlations between different types of media coverage and audience perceptions, attitudes and behavior will be developed after the completion of the qualitative strands. The standard tests will be employed to determine the statistical significance of the findings and of the computed correlation coefficients.

Analysis and integration of the findings from the qualitative and quantitative stages will be conducted in order to define the key roles – both constructive and destructive – that media active lay publics play, under specific circumstances in the news production and dissemination processes.

### **Research design (Burundi, DRC)**

According to INFOCORE's 'Description of Work' twelve focus groups are to be conducted in three waves in the DRC and Burundi respectively. All focused group interviews predominantly revolve around the questions of how lay publics in conflict areas use and evaluate the media and different news sources on the one hand and how they perceive and interpret conflict-related news on the other hand. In addition to that some of the focus groups will particularly shed light on the interaction between lay publics and the media.

The structure of the focus group discussions being based on both past and current events will also follow this line: In a first step, discussions will be focusing on the general media use, media evaluation and news sources selection before addressing specific conflict-related topics. As the study aims at identifying interpretative frames being linked to past and present events, the discussions need to include memory aids. For this reason, photos, audio elements (e.g. political statements) and a set of cards with single terms and keywords related to key events will be displayed to help determine what news topics attract/ed the most interest and are/were regularly followed by the participants (> awareness of conflict-related news). At the same time, the cards, photos and audio elements will encourage participants to make associations and to find meanings around the different concepts being displayed (> perception and interpretation of conflict-related topics).

The advantages of this approach are threefold: First of all, considering the high illiteracy rates in both countries and different levels of French language proficiency among the lay population, single keywords or photos are the most effective way to stimulate a discussion. Alternatively, one could display media content, but newspaper articles (available exclusively in French) can only be read by the academic elite and radio or TV broadcasts would have to be transcribed and translated from local languages into French. Secondly, a research design including an associative approach might reduce the risk of biased answers. A

pre-selection of media reports could influence the participants' responses to a certain degree, while disregarding the fact that certain media channels and conflict-related topics might have been simply ignored by lay people in the past. Lastly, the key terms can remain the same over the time, while new keywords covering new events can be added on easily. As past events affect the perception of present events this approach seems most suitable to grasp the lay public's interpretations of conflict-related news. As starting points for determining the key terms will serve a study of Séverine Autesserre (2012) who analyzed dominant narratives on the war in Eastern Congo based on 170 in-depth interviews, as well as a baseline study in the DRC and Burundi conducted by two WP3 members in August 2014 (Frère, Nindorera, & Fiedler, 2014).

### *Sampling strategy*

Considering that we won't be able to carry out a quantitative analysis, but to allow for generalizations nevertheless, respondents will be selected by theoretical sampling following the principles of data saturation as far as possible. Theoretical saturation refers to the point "at which gathering more data about a theoretical category reveals no new properties nor yields any further theoretical insights" about the research objective (Bryant & Charmaz 2007: 611). The selection of participants will be done according to the following criteria: gender, age (starting from 16 years), educational level, ethnical background and living conditions (urban/rural regions). In addition to that, three to four groups of 'active' media users will be selected per country (participants of *clubs d'auditeurs*, bloggers, etc.). Each focus group should consist of seven to eight participants maximum to ensure that up to 90 people are interviewed in Burundi and the DRC respectively. The first and second wave of focus groups is scheduled for 2015, the third wave for 2016. For each of the waves, new participants will be recruited with the help of local partners and organizations.

### *Organization of focus groups*

In accordance with the EU's requirements, the procedure will be as follows: Before conducting the focused group interviews, prior informed consent will be required in written form from each individual participant. The participants will be provided first with a clear written description (Information Sheet) on the nature, significance, implications and risks of their participation in the project, as well as on their free and voluntary decision to participate or to stop participating at any time and for any reason. This information will be also read to all participants to make sure that illiterate people understand the whole research process. Prior to the discussions, participants will be informed that the research study is anonymous and no information is asked that may link the answers to their identity. All information they supply during the focus groups will be held in confidence and, unless they specifically indicate consent, their names will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

Two local researchers (focus group facilitator/assistant) from each country respectively will be trained in focus groups techniques from a theoretical and practical perspective. To ensure the inclusion of all

social groups, the focus groups will be conducted in French and local languages (Burundi: Kirundi, DRC: Lingala, Swahili). The focus group discussions for the case study on Burundi will be held in Bujumbura, a second major city (e.g. Gitega, Muyinga or Ngosi) and two rural areas. The focus group discussions for the DRC case will be organized in Kinshasa, in the major cities of East Congo (Bukavu, Goma) and one rural area. All work will be monitored and supervised by the Brussels project team.

The discussions will be recorded, transcribed and translated with the help of local researchers. While the analysis of the material will mainly use inductive explanatory reasoning to explore dominant interpretative frames, it will use elements of deductive logic, too, drawing on previous research in Central Africa as well as media use theories.

### *Research questions*

Two aspects are at the center of attention: first, the influence of conflict news upon public perceptions, attitudes and interpretations inside conflict zones (meaning the reception and interpretation of evidential claims, frames and specific agendas), and secondly, the roles of lay actors in terms of media production (in other words: the interaction between lay publics and different types of media). In line with WP3's Objectives (1)-(6), the focus group guidelines will focus on the following questions:

*1) Identification of media use patterns and habits in conflict zones:* What media do lay publics watch, read and listen to (type of medium used, frequency of use)? What role do the media play in their daily life? How relevant are traditional and social media offers for 'news gathering'? How important are these comparing to other sources (e.g. personal contacts, tribal leader, community etc.)? Where do people primarily get their information from? What are the major shortcomings of the national/local media offer (e.g. ideological and partisan bias, impartiality, circulation of rumors etc.)? Where do people see room for improvement?

*2) Motives of media use and evaluation of media channels:* Why do lay publics turn to a specific media channel/news source? What media channel/news source do they trust most and why? How do they evaluate available media channels/news sources (e.g. in terms of relevance, credibility, neutrality etc.)? How do they evaluate the public image/reputation of specific local and external media channels (transnational/international media), media development and peace-building organizations or journalists (e.g. in terms of corruption, trustworthiness, impartiality, etc.)?

*3) Reception and interpretation of conflict-related news:* What news sources reporting conflict-related information do lay publics watch, read and listen to? What conflict-related key events were considered and followed by lay publics in the past three years? In what way are these key events perceived and interpreted by lay people?

4) *The role of user-generated content and motives of interaction with the media:* What media do lay actors mostly respond or reply to and why? When, how often and why do they publish content in print media, online or via social media? When, how often and why do they gather in listeners' clubs (*clubs d'auditeurs*)? What (conflict-related) issues are primarily tackled?

### Research design (Syria)

Although WP3's overall methodological concept includes both a qualitative and quantitative research strategy, only a quantitative approach is being considered in the case of Syria for logistical and safety reasons. Against the background of the WP3 objectives, the questionnaire will mainly cover three areas: a) media use patterns and habits, b) reception and interpretation of conflict-related news and c) interaction of lay publics with the media. The collected data will be analyzed quantitatively, by using classical techniques of statistical data analysis. The telephone survey will be conducted in joint collaboration with a local research institution, as the recruitment and sampling of participants might prove difficult.

### *Sampling strategy*

The best method of recruitment for a population where no adequate sampling scheme or data exist is a snowball sampling technique (purposive sampling) with multiple entry points into the communities. Due to the ongoing war many people have been killed, internally displaced or left the country to the neighboring states—for this reason there is no reliable statistical data on these demographic changes available. To reduce selection bias, researchers would have to use a broad range and different entry points, using a small number of contacts from each entry point. Against this background, the present study would have to include a larger group of Syrian interviewers to make use of their different personal entry points for the telephone survey. The advantages of this sampling strategy are twofold: Randomized digit dialing, as applied in the Macedonian case, cannot be used for Syria. Many Syrians use Turkish cell phones, particularly in the 'Northern liberated areas' due to interruptions of Syrian mobile networks or bad connections. Secondly, the interview partner will know who is on the other side of line—a fact that is of great importance considering the atmosphere of mistrust and anxiety among Syria's population. The local partner research institution has both the expertise in academic research in Syria and contacts to Syrian students and academics that could help realizing the telephone survey.

The participants will be informed properly on the research consortium and on the project itself. They will be verbally provided with a clear explanation on the nature, significance, implications and risks from their participation in the project, as well as on their free and voluntary decision to participate or to stop participating at any time and for any reason in the telephone survey. The participants will be informed that the research study is anonymous, that their phone number will be deleted after the completion of the interview and that their answers will be used only for the research purposes. Names, addresses or other personal information that can identify participants will not be collected. The participants will be provided

with a telephone number on which they can call to get more information on the research study. The survey will not involve asking interviewees to respond to sensitive questions that might put them at risk.

#### *Research questions*

1) *Identification of media use patterns and habits in conflict zones:* What media do lay publics watch, read and listen to (type of medium used, frequency of use)? What role do the media play in their daily life? How relevant are traditional and social media offers for ‘news gathering’? How important are these comparing to other sources (where do people primarily get their information from)? What are the major shortcomings of the national/local media offer (e.g. ideological and partisan bias, impartiality, circulation of rumors etc.)? Where do people see room for improvement?

2) *Reception and interpretation of conflict-related news:* What news sources reporting conflict-related information do lay publics watch, read and listen to? What conflict-related key events were considered and followed by lay publics in the past three years? In what way are these key events perceived and interpreted by lay people?

3) *The role of user-generated content and interaction with the media:* What media do lay actors mostly respond or reply to and why? When and how often do they publish content in print media, online or via social media?

#### **Research design (Israel, Palestine)**

In the Israeli/Palestinian case only a quantitative approach will be implemented to meet the basic objectives of WP3: a) to determine media use patterns and habits, b) to examine the reception and interpretation of conflict-related news and c) to delineate the patterns of interaction of lay publics with the media. In both conflict zones a survey will be conducted by two different research agencies (Israeli and Palestinian respectively) elected upon a previously determined procedure. In the Palestinian case, a face-to-face survey will be conducted, due to the fact that a telephone survey is not be feasible on the Palestinian territories.

#### *Sampling strategy*

In both cases a representative sample of at least 1000 interviewees will be selected (15 years and older). In Palestinian, territories from Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem will be encompassed with the face-to-face survey. A number of polling centers will be randomly selected from the total number of polling centers (about 998), determined by the Central Elections Committee in each town, village or camp. The polling centers are distributed among the constituencies in accordance with the density of the voters and the number of the poll centers in each district (governorate).

A stratified probability sample will be selected throughout Israel using the following criteria: sector, ultra-orthodox Jews, Jewish residents in West Bank settlements, Kibbutz members, other Jews, immigrants and Arabs; the characteristics of town residence, and gender. Among immigrants, additional criteria for country of origin and year of immigration will be applied. The data will be weighted to reflect the actual distribution of Jews, Arabs and others in Israel.

The collected data will be analyzed with the traditional techniques of statistical data analysis.

#### *Research questions*

- What are the *patterns of media use* among different audience segments?
- What are the perceptions, beliefs and attitudes of audiences about the specific conflict related coverage?
- What *types of interaction* do different audience segments practice *with different types of media*?
- Which *audience segments have been inter(active) with the media* in relation to the key conflict issues and significant events?

#### **Research ethics**

*Focus groups:* Before conducting focused group interviews, prior informed consent will be required in written form from each individual participant. The participants will be provided first with a clear written description (Information Sheet) on the nature, significance, implications and risks from their participation in the project, as well as on their free and voluntary decision to participate or to stop participating at any time and for any reason in the focus groups. Also, the participants will be informed that the research study is anonymous and no information is asked that may link the answers with their identity. All information they supply during the focus groups will be held in confidence and, unless they specifically indicate consent, their names will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

*Telephone Survey:* The potential participants will be informed properly on the name of the research agency and on the project itself. They will be verbally provided with a clear explanation on the nature, significance, implications and risks from their participation in the project, as well as on their free and voluntary decision to participate or to stop participating at any time and for any reason in the telephone survey. The participants will be informed that the research study is anonymous, that their phone number has been chosen randomly and that their answers will be used only for the research purposes. Names, addresses or other personal information that can identify participants will not be collected. The participants will be provided with a telephone number on which they can call to get more information on the research study.

All the data gathered through the qualitative and quantitative stage will be safely stored in a secure facility and only the researchers of the project will have access to this information. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. All precautions will be undertaken so that no one will be able to neither identify nor determine any personal information of the participants. The research agency that will be subcontracted for the telephone survey will sign a contract where all ethic concerns will be

addressed and guaranteed. All precautionous measures will be undertaken to monitor the compliance with the signed contract.

All the other potential risks will be continuously monitored and minimized by the research team in order not to expose researchers or participants at any risk.



## References

- Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London, England: Verso Books.
- Autesserre, S. (2012): Dangerous Tales: Dominant Narratives on the Congo and Their Unintended Consequences. In *African Affairs*, Vol. 111(443), 202-222, doi: 10.1093/afraf/adr080.
- Baden, C. (2010). *Communication, contextualization, & cognition: Patterns & processes of frames' influence on people's interpretations of the EU Constitution*. Delft, The Netherlands: Eburon.
- Benford, R. D., & Snow, D. A. (2000). Framing processes and social movements: An overview and assessment. *Annual Review of Sociology*, Volume 26, 611-639.
- Bryant, A.; Charmaz, K. (2007): *The Sage Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London: Sage.
- Cottle, S. (2006). *Mediated Conflict*, Berkshire: Open University press
- Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, Volume 43, No. 4.
- Frère, M.-S. (2007). *The Media and Conflicts in Centra Africa*, Lynne Reinner Publishers.
- Frère, M.-S.; Nindorera, W.; Fiedler, A. (2014): “Promouvoir des médias professionnels et responsables contribuant aux processus démocratiques dans les Grands Lacs”. Baseline Study, September 2014. Bujumbura: Institut Panos Grands Lacs.
- Gamson, W. A., & Modigliani, A. (1987). The changing culture of affirmative action. In R. G. Braungart & M. M. Braungart (Eds.), *Research in Political Sociology, Volume 3*. Greenwich, CN: JAI Press.
- Georgievski, P. & Trpevska, S.(2008). ‘The Role of Media in the 2001 Armed Conflict in Macedonia’. In: *Images of the Balkans: Historical Approaches and Communication Perspectives*; Ed: Zlateva, M.; Sofia: University “St. Kliment Ohridski”, 2008, pp. 292-301.
- Hanitzsch, T. (2007). Situating peace journalism in journalism studies: A critical appraisal. *Conflict and Communication online*, 6(2), 1-9.
- McQuail, D. (2005). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. London, England: Sage Publications
- Micevski, I. (2014). Distinctions: Audiences, Lay Publics & Media Active Lay Publics. INFOCORE working paper, available at: [http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/INFOCORE-conceptual-paper\\_media\\_active\\_lay\\_publics-I.M.pdf](http://www.infocore.eu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/INFOCORE-conceptual-paper_media_active_lay_publics-I.M.pdf) ; last accessed July 2015.
- Tenenboim-Weinblatt, K. (2013). Bridging collective memories and public agendas: Toward a theory of mediated prospective memory. In *Communication Theory*, Vol. 23(2), 91-111.
- Weber, M. (1978). *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Berkley, CA: U. California Press.
- Wolfsfeld, G. (2004). *Media and the path to peace*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Annexes:***Information and Consent (English)*

## INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: (IN)FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION:  
THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

WP3 Media and Publics

Snezana Trpevska, PhD in Sociological Sciences  
Professor at the School of Journalism and Public Relations  
Address: Jurij Gagarin no. 17/1-1, Skopje, Republic of Macedonia  
Tel. +389 2 3090 004  
Fax +389 2 3090 104  
E-mail: strpevska@vs.edu.mk

This interview is part of a research project that focuses on the conditions that deal with the different media roles in mitigating conflicts or strengthening peace building processes. To understand the causes and impacts of different media roles, the purpose of this project is to, among other things, analyze the process of conflict news production and dissemination by different kinds of media. The principal researcher, Dr Snezana Trpevska (professor at the School of Journalism and Public Relations), will provide you with all necessary information regarding this research project. The research project involves only people who agree to participate, based on their voluntary and free choice. Please, take your time to make your decision about participating. If you have any questions, you can ask the researchers for additional information.

The study is carefully designed so that no risks or discomforts are foreseen if you decide to participate in this research project. No costs are involved. The information you provide will help the researcher understand the issue under study. While the collected results may not benefit you directly, you will help in the study of a current and important phenomenon dealing with the role of the media in conflict cycles and peace building processes. Your participation in the research study is voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time and for any reason you decide. Your decision to stop participating or to refuse to answer particular questions will not affect your relationship with the research team or any other persons associated with the project.

The research study is anonymous and no information is asked that may link your given answers with your identity. All information you supply during the interview/survey/focus groups will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research. Your data will be safely stored in a secure facility and only the researchers of the project will have access to this information. Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law. All precautions will be undertaken so that no one will be able to neither identify you nor determine any personal information of yourself. No one will know whether you have participated in the study or not. Nothing you state in the interview/questionnaire/discussion will in any way affect yourself, your family or working environment.

*For Individual Interviews:*

The researcher will interview you for around one hour to one hour and a half, in a private jointly agreed location of convenience. Alternative locations include private offices at the School of Journalism and Public Relations (Jurij Gagarin no. 17/1-1, Skopje) or the infrastructures provided by organizations participating in the project (NGO`s), or any other private location you may suggest. No one else but the interviewer will be present unless you would like someone else to be there. The researcher will make a voice recording of the interview for analytical purposes. In order to guarantee confidentiality, a fake name will be assigned to you for use during the interview, if you agree. The interview will be transcribed for data analysis, removing any mention of names. After transcription, voice recordings will be destroyed; and

at the end of the project, all data will be irreversibly deleted. If you do not wish to answer any of the questions during the interview, you may say so and the interviewer will move on to the next question.

*For focused group interviews (focus groups):*

You will take part in a discussion with several other persons with similar experiences. The discussion within this group interview will last for around one hour and a half. We will make a voice recording of the discussion for analytical purposes, because we need to rely on your opinions exactly as they were said in the discussion. The interview will be transcribed for data analysis, removing any mention of names. After transcription, voice recordings will be destroyed; and at the end of the project, all data will be irreversibly deleted. It is important for all of you to express your views and opinions on the topics of discussion freely, without any constraints. The session is open, there are no correct or false answers, everyone's view is important. It is also important to speak one person at a time, because otherwise on the recording you would speak over each other. Before we start, please introduce yourself and write down your first name on the card that is placed in front of you.

*For telephone surveys:*

Hello, I'm \_\_\_\_\_ calling on behalf of [organization name]. We are doing a survey and are asking questions about how media report on [the recent events in the country]. The information provided will be used to [describe purpose of study]. Your phone number has been chosen randomly to be included in the study. I won't ask for your name, address or other personal information that can identify you. You don't have to answer any question you don't want to, and you can end the interview at any time. The interview takes only about [estimate number of minutes] and any information you give me will be confidential. If you have questions about this survey, I will provide you with a telephone number for you to call to get more information.

Nr#. \_\_\_\_\_

*Consent Form (English)*

(WP3 on Media and Publics)

## “(IN) FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION: THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN VIOLENT CONFLICT”

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name or of the interviewee) have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study. I understand that participation in the interview is voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

(Please circle the option you prefer.)

1. I agree to have this interview recorded and for my comments to be personally attributed.
- OR
2. I agree to allow this interview to be recorded but not for my comments to be personally attributed. For these purposes, I wish that my name remains anonymous. However, I agree that the name of my organization can be attached to my comments.

☐ I have been given a copy of this consent form.

## Statement by the Principal Researcher

I confirm that the participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study, and all the questions asked by the participant have been answered correctly and to the best of my ability. I confirm that the individual has not been coerced into giving consent, and the consent has been given freely and voluntarily.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant name                      Signature                      \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of the organization of the participant                      Country

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher                      Date                      Signature

*Information and Consent (French)*

## INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: (IN)FORMING CONFLICT PREVENTION, RESPONSE AND RESOLUTION:  
THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN VIOLENT CONFLICT

(INFORMER OU PREVENIR LES CONFLITS, REACTIONS ET RESOLUTIONS :  
LE RÔLE DES MEDIA DANS LES CONFLITS ARMES)

WP3 Media and Publics

Nom, poste et adresse de contact des chercheurs principaux :

Marie-Soleil Frère  
Professeur à l'Université libre de Bruxelles  
Directrice ReSIC (Centre de Recherche en Information et Communication)  
Université libre de Bruxelles  
[msfrere@ulb.ac.be](mailto:msfrere@ulb.ac.be)  
CP.123-ReSIC 50, avenue F. Roosevelt  
1050 Bruxelles (Belgique)  
Tél : +32.2.650.44.49

Anke Fiedler  
Post-Doctorante à l'Université libre de Bruxelles  
[afiedler@ulb.ac.be](mailto:afiedler@ulb.ac.be)  
CP.123- ReSIC, 50, avenue F. Roosevelt  
1050 Bruxelles (Belgique)

Le présent entretien fait partie d'un projet de recherche qui analyse les conditions qui influencent les rôles spécifiques joués par les media pour atténuer les effets des conflits ou pour renforcer les processus de construction de la paix. En vue de comprendre les causes et l'impact des différents rôles joués par les media, le présent projet se fixe, entre autres, pour objectif d'analyser le processus de production et de diffusion de l'information par différents types de media. Les chercheurs principaux, Marie-Soleil Frère (professeur à l'Université libre de Bruxelles) et Anke Fiedler (post-doctorante à l'Université libre de Bruxelles) mettront à votre disposition toute l'information nécessaire quant à la conduite de cette recherche. Le projet n'engage que des personnes qui, de leur plein gré, donnent leur accord pour y participer. Prenez le temps nécessaire pour décider si vous êtes disposé à participer à ce projet et adressez-vous aux chercheurs pour toute question additionnelle.

L'étude est conçue de manière à éviter tout risque et tout désagrément prévisible pour les participants. La participation n'inclut pas de coûts à régler. L'information que vous mettrez à disposition servira aux chercheurs à affiner leur compréhension de la thématique analysée. Même si vous ne tirez pas un bénéfice personnel direct de votre participation, vous aurez contribué à améliorer la compréhension du phénomène actuel que constitue le rôle des media dans les cycles de conflits armés et dans les processus de construction de la paix. Votre participation à cette recherche est entièrement libre et volontaire et vous pouvez à tout moment décider d'y mettre fin pour raisons personnelles. Si vous décidez de vous retirer du projet ou si vous choisissez de ne pas répondre à certaines questions spécifiques cela n'aura aucune incidence sur votre relation avec l'équipe de chercheurs ou avec toute autre personne associée au projet.

La présente recherche garantit l'anonymat des participants et elle ne requiert aucune information qui pourrait établir un lien entre vos réponses et votre identité personnelle. Toute information que vous donnerez au cours des interviews, des enquêtes et des réunions de groupes témoins sera traitée confidentiellement, et à moins que vous n'ayez donné votre accord préalable, votre nom ne figurera pas dans les rapports et publications issus de la recherche. Toutes les données recueillies seront conservées en lieu sûr et seuls les chercheurs y auront accès. La confidentialité sera entièrement garantie au regard des

lois en vigueur. Toute précaution sera prise en vue d'assurer que personne ne puisse vous identifier ou avoir accès à des informations vous concernant. Votre participation au projet restera entièrement confidentielle et les déclarations faites au cours des entrevues n'auront aucune incidence sur vous même, votre famille ou votre entourage.

*Pour les réunions de groupes témoins (focus group) :*

Vous allez participer à des entrevues collectives avec plusieurs autres personnes qui détiennent une expérience similaire à la vôtre. Il est prévu que les discussions en groupe durent environ une heure et demie. Nous procéderons à l'enregistrement des séances en vue de pouvoir analyser leur contenu parce qu'il est essentiel de tenir compte de vos opinions de manière exacte. Les entrevues seront transcrites pour procéder à une analyse de contenu et toute mention des noms de personnes sera effacée. Après la transcription les enregistrements sonores seront détruits et, à la fin du projet, l'ensemble des données récoltées sera irréversiblement supprimé. Il est essentiel que chaque participant puisse exprimer ses vues et opinions sur le sujet de la discussion librement et sans aucune contrainte. Les séances de discussion représentent une plate-forme libre, il n'y a pas de réponses correctes ou fausses, l'opinion de chacun compte. Il est aussi important que chaque personne parle à son tour afin d'éviter que les voix soient se superposent les unes aux autres durant l'enregistrement. Avant le début de la séance de discussion, vous aurez à vous présenter et à écrire votre nom sur la carte placée devant vous.

*Pour les entretiens individuels :*

Le chercheur va vous poser des questions pendant environ une heure et demie, dans un endroit privé que vous aurez choisi d'un commun accord. Il est possible de se rencontrer dans un bureau privé ou dans des infrastructures mises à disposition par des organisations qui participent au projet (par exemple des ONG etc.) ou dans tout autre endroit de votre choix. Seul le chercheur sera présent mais vous pouvez suggérer qu'une autre personne vous accompagne si tel est votre souhait. Le chercheur fera un enregistrement sonore de l'entretien pour les besoins de l'analyse de contenu.

Si vous donnez votre accord, nous souhaiterions mentionner votre nom et votre poste actuel dans les publications du projet. Dans ce cas nous vous donnerons connaissance de la transcription de l'entretien entier. Si vous ne souhaitez pas répondre à certaines questions au cours de l'entretien, il vous suffira de le mentionner et le chercheur passera à la question suivante.

Si vous ne souhaitez pas que votre nom soit mentionné, nous utiliserons un pseudonyme pour la durée de l'entretien, avec votre accord, afin de garantir la confidentialité. L'entretien sera transcrit pour l'analyse de contenu mais toute mention de noms sera supprimée. Après la transcription, les enregistrements sonores seront détruits et, à la fin du projet, l'ensemble des données récoltées sera irréversiblement supprimé. Toutes les données recueillies seront conservées en lieu sûr et seuls les chercheurs y auront accès. La confidentialité sera entièrement garantie au regard des lois en vigueur. Toute précaution sera prise en vue d'assurer que personne ne puisse vous identifier ou avoir accès à des informations vous concernant. Votre participation au projet restera entièrement confidentielle et les déclarations faites au cours des entrevues n'auront aucune incidence sur vous même, votre famille ou votre entourage.

*Consent Form (French)***Formulaire de consentement**

(pour les entretiens individuels et pour les entrevues de groupe)

Le projet intitulé

« INFORMER OU PREVENIR LES CONFLITS, REACTIONS ET RESOLUTIONS : LE RÔLE  
DES MEDIA DANS LES CONFLITS ARMES »

est mis en œuvre par un consortium international d'organisations et a pour objectif d'identifier les différents rôles joués par les media dans le cycle des conflits armés et dans les processus d'édification de la paix. Le projet inclut des institutions d'Allemagne, du Royaume Uni, d'Israël, de Grèce, de Belgique, de la République de Macédoine et d'Espagne.

\_\_\_\_\_ (nom de la personne interrogée)

J'ai pris connaissance des informations ci-dessus, ou elles m'ont été lues. J'ai eu la possibilité de poser des questions à leur sujet et ai obtenu des réponses satisfaisantes à chaque question. Je donne librement mon consentement pour participer à cette étude.

Je comprends que la participation à l'entrevue/entretien est volontaire et que je conserve le droit de me retirer à tout moment sans avoir à donner de motif.

(Prière d'entourer l'option que vous préférez) :

1. J'accepte que cet entretien soit enregistré et que mes commentaires me soient attribués personnellement. J'accepte aussi que mon nom et mon poste actuel soient mentionnés.

**OU**

2. J'accepte de donner mon autorisation pour que l'entretien soit enregistré mais sans que mes commentaires me soient attribués personnellement. A cet effet je souhaite que mon identité reste anonyme. Cependant j'accepte que le nom de mon organisation soit mentionné en lien avec mes déclarations.

Je confirme avoir reçu copie de ce formulaire de consentement.

**Déclaration du chercheur principal**

Je confirme que le participant a eu la possibilité de poser des questions à propos de l'étude et que toutes les questions du participant ont reçu des réponses correctes et au mieux de ma connaissance. Je confirme que la personne n'a été soumise à aucune pression et qu'elle a donné son consentement librement et de son plein gré.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nom du participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name de l'organisation du participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pays

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nom du chercheur

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature





[illegible]