



MeCoDEM Enters Next Research Phase: Journalism Ethics and Practice

The EU-funded project “Media, Conflict and Democratisation” (MeCoDEM) has kicked off its research on journalism ethics and practices. Interviews with 100 journalists from Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa are scheduled for the next six months. The MeCoDEM research team worked with external experts to finalise the research plan and methodological approach at a fieldwork planning meeting in Hamburg, Germany on 6-7 October 2014.

The working practices and conditions, role perceptions and ethical orientations of journalists who covered democratisation conflicts in Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa will be central to MeCoDEM’s forthcoming fieldwork activity. Starting from November 2014, MeCoDEM’s country teams will use semi-structured interviews to investigate these areas. Research data will be analyzed by mid-2015 and used to inform a series of impact workshops for local stakeholders.

Distinguished guests contributed to discussions at MeCoDEM’s recent fieldwork planning meeting. **Dirk Asendorpf** covers Africa topics for DIE ZEIT and ARD radio stations. He lived and worked in South Africa for three years. **Arjen van Dalen** is an expert in political journalism, journalistic role perceptions, and comparative methods from the University of Southern Denmark. PhD candidates **Bettina Haasen**, **Swenja Kopp**, **Mahmud Shameem** and **Ann-Mabel Sanyu** specialize in international research. Their first-hand experience served as a valuable resource.

“It is a great pleasure to welcome these specialists to our meeting”, said **Irene Neverla** (University of Hamburg), host of the meeting and leader of the work package “Journalism Ethics and Practices”. “Their expertise will bring enormous benefits to MeCoDEM’s work on the ground.”

“Our aim is to produce results that make a difference to emerging democracies and so it is crucial that we tie up our research activities with what is happening on the ground from the very beginning,” added **Katrin Voltmer**, MeCoDEM’s coordinator.

About MeCoDEM:

MeCoDEM began on 1 February 2014 and will run over three years. The project investigates the interplay of communication and democratisation conflicts in four emerging democracies, Egypt, Kenya, Serbia and South Africa, each of them representing unique aspects of transitional / post-transitional divisions. Based on a comparative case study design, the research covers constitutional conflicts, civic conflicts and conflicts surrounding accountability and good governance. These conflicts constitute arenas of dispute where the media interact with the communicative strategies of governments on the one hand, and political activists and political movements struggling for recognition on the other.

MeCoDEM is funded by the European Union within the EU’s Seventh Framework Programme. With a budget of 2.2 million Euros, the project consortium includes eight partner institutions from six countries: University of Leeds (coordinating institution), University of Belgrade, University of Hamburg, University of Cape Town, University of Oxford, Stockholm University, Ruhr University Bochum and American University in Cairo.

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