



median
research
centre

Annual Report
2017

MEDIAN RESEARCH CENTRE

CONTENTS

1 WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DID

4 MILESTONES

5 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017

6 YEAR IN REVIEW

6 Implemented Projects

11 Events

12 Median research centre in media

13 Financial results

14 MANAGEMENT

15 Management overview

15 Human capital

16 Professional development

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DID

Median Research Centre (MRC) is an independent, non-profit organisation. Through our research and public information activities, we aim ultimately to contribute to improvements in the quality of democracy and governance. We use the latest theoretical advances and research methods to explore the pressing issues of contemporary society and to pursue practical applications for scientific advances; we seek to enhance public understanding of current issues by bringing insights from the social sciences to a wider audience.

MRC taps into the skills and knowledge of researchers, professors and experts with academic training and/or professional experience in Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, the United Kingdom and the United States. Our staff's areas of expertise include: public opinion, media, elections, political representation, political institutions, social policy, political economy and, more generally, the quality of democracy.

We focus on issues related to: intolerant and anti-democratic attitudes and their manifestations (particularly online),

information provision, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, citizen involvement, political accountability and substantive representation, and media and user engagement through online media outlets.

Our main research activities in 2017 focused on the study of intolerant and anti-democratic attitudes and online comments, media outlets' engagement with their audience and the content generated in this way, the media landscape in Romania and how it fared compared with other European media systems, as well as an analysis of the coverage of EU-related topics in cross-national media.

Public opinion

Over the past few years, there has been increased concern in many countries regarding growing political polarization and the intolerance of difference, whether based on skin colour, national origin, sexual orientation or other aspects that can divide people into in-groups and out-groups – including socio-economic status and political views. While more open borders, greater economic interdependence and

the Internet have provided opportunities for different people to interact or work together, they have also brought fresh ways for people to clash with those they do not see eye to eye with, to isolate themselves in echo chambers or to target each other. Defending and promoting the values of equality, mutual respect and civic engagement with the other is essential to maintain a well-functioning democracy. But to do this effectively it is necessary to understand where intolerance comes from, how it manifests itself and why. We see it as part of our mission to contribute to a better understanding of intolerant and anti-democratic attitudes and their manifestation and to employ rigorous scientific examination to explore (new) ways of promoting mutual tolerance and the acceptance of democratic norms.

Thus, in 2017, we continued work on a project we began in 2014, entitled 'Less Hate, More Speech: An Experimental and Comparative Study in Media and Political Elites' Ability to Nurture Civil, Tolerant, Pro-Democratic Citizens,' (LHMS) funded through the EEA Financial Mechanism and implemented in partnership with

the Central European University and the University of Bergen. The work of MRC and its partners in Norway provides insight into human mechanisms and behaviours that are universal, but, through its comparative dimensions, it also promises to shed light on what these phenomena look like in two different societies - one with much more deeply and widely engendered norms of equality than the other - as well as why certain stark differences occur and what this tells us about the prospects of change for the better.

Among other activities in this area, in 2017 we continued our efforts to understand how and why intolerant attitudes and opinions manifest themselves among Romanian citizens. With the help of Questia and their online panel of citizens, we launched weekly short surveys, sometimes involving experimental designs, which would answer our research questions. In May 2017, MRC researchers put together a panel during the Science of Politics Conference (SCOPE) in Bucharest, where we presented four academic papers that explored prejudice and intolerant discourse from different perspectives and in various contexts.

Media and user engagement by online media

Traditional outlets are facing significant and well-documented challenges, including decreased subscription and advertising revenue, partly due to the erosion of trust in the media and the migration of audiences to alternative news sources. Increased financial liability, smaller newsrooms and fewer resources threaten the media's ability to adequately perform its essential role in a democracy: to inform, educate and serve as a watchdog. Some of the audience, for its part, appears by turns increasingly sceptical of the mainstream media's methods - and its tropes - and more vulnerable to misinformation or exaggeration.

To meet these challenges, some outlets, especially in Western Europe and the United States, are finding creative ways to generate revenue, produce and package content and to engage with their audience, in order to build a relationship that can engender trust and loyalty.

Meanwhile, the media context in Romania is, in many ways, more challenging than in other European countries. The media landscape is highly polarized and split along partisan lines; consumption of print outlets and media literacy are both extremely low; the public broadcaster's viewership is dwindling; media business models are unsustainable; and outlets have been particularly hard hit by the decline in advertising revenue in recent years. Journalists themselves have both little training and an exceedingly precarious position in the workplace, lacking basic protections and with virtually no institutions or mechanisms in place to defend their interests or to uphold basic journalistic norms. In this context, MRC has continued its media-related work in 2017, including conducting the research and writing for the Romania-focused section of the 30-country Media Pluralism Monitor for the third year in a row.

We also prepared and implemented the third wave of a long-standing survey, the European Media System Survey, a project focused on over 30 European countries and used by a large number of researchers in over 50 comparative high-level publications.

The project, which has been ongoing since 2010, has prepared an extensive survey that was sent out to more than 2,000 media experts and its results will be available in 2018.

As part of the aforementioned 'Less Hate, More Speech' project, we have also continued gathering and analysing data on comment moderation on national Romanian websites - effectively a real-world experiment concerning how norms can be developed and enforced in the online environment, which sheds light both on how the media can perform its gate-keeping function in the digital age and on some potentially effective ways of countering hate speech, intolerance and incivility online.

MARKET PLURALITY

is dealing mostly with media ownership, an economic component that is widely considered essential in the assessment of a level of media pluralism in any given context.

Risk | low ● medium ● high ●



RISK LEVELS



49%

EU 28 + 2 | average risk



Results Romanian media market - Media Pluralism Monitor 2017

2004 2007 2008 2009 2012 2014 2015 2017

MRC received one of its first large grants, for the 'Personalization as a goal of electoral reform' project, awarded by the International Policy Fellowship Program of the Open Society Institute, Budapest.

MRC was part of a European funded project for the first time - Eurequal, 'focused on the inequalities in post-communist societies and their impact on the consolidation of democracy.'

TestVot, the only voting advice application in Romania to be present at each election, was launched with the aim of developing civic participation in Moldova and Romania through innovative online tools based on research.

MRC became part of an international consortium focussed on 'the deliberative civic involvement in the decision-making process in the EU', through the Europolis project.

MRC launched OpenPolitics.ro, an online platform of debates and political analyses, just in time to provide important information on party promises and in-depth studies on topics high on the public agenda during the parliamentary elections.

MRC won a grant for €800,000 for a three-year research project called Less Hate, More Speech to 'examine the role political elites and mass media play, intentionally or unintentionally, in reducing or promoting anti-democratic and intolerant discourse among the citizens.' It also launched Parliament Transparent, an online tool for monitoring MPs activities.

MRC won three more projects, two of which were funded by the Civil Society Development Foundation and one as part of an international consortium in a three-year project called EUENGAGE.

Deployed the 3rd wave of the European Media System Survey academic study to over 2,000 experts across Europe and in 35 media systems.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2017



200,000 page views of our online content across websites

5 PAPERS

1 BOOK MANUSCRIPT 



100,000 unique users across websites

1 survey of journalists



8 online focus groups with readers of news websites in Romania

3rd



year in a row – country rapporteur for theMedia Pluralism Monitor, commissioned by the European Commission in 30 countries



20 analyses published across multiple platforms

6 RESEARCH REPORTS

HOSTING ORGANISATION FOR A FULBRIGHT RESEARCH GRANTEE



4 research reports

4 events organised locally and abroad



2 infographics & **3** online quizzes derived from work in the Less Hate, More Speech project

4 conference presentations



REWARDED FOR PARTICIPATING IN HORIZON 2020 RESEARCH PROJECTS BY UEFISCDI

6 OpenPolitics newsletters sent out to a growing base of subscribers



YEAR IN REVIEW

IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Over the past year we have been focusing both on wrapping up projects that ended in 2017 as well as on developing further the work on those still ongoing and pitching new project ideas along with our traditional partners as well as with new ones. We have continued to build on the solid organisational changes implemented in 2016 and to consolidate the core team.

In the first half of the year we concentrated on wrapping up the 3-year research project Less Hate, More Speech, which required significant administrative efforts and steady precision for the final touches on the deliverables contained within the project.

Moreover, we continued the work done in the project even after the financing ended, by publishing articles, quizzes and analyses from the wealth of data gathered in the project.

At the same time work on the EUEENGAGE project intensified, especially the data analysis preparing for the delivery of the two papers expected as deliverables in this project.

Even when financing was not available for all

our research work, we diligently took steps to ensure that we contributed our expertise in respect of several topics that were high on the public agenda.

Public opinion, media and user engagement were the main research areas over the year and several of our projects were at the crossroads of these thematic areas.

The rest of the section provides more detailed information on all our projects, outcomes and work we have done over the past year.

MEDIA PLURALISM MONITOR

2017 was the third year during which we carried out research for the Media Pluralism Monitor (MPM), a useful tool that assesses the risk to media plurality in several European countries.

The documentation process dealt with 200 indicators that relate to the protection of media pluralism and media freedom, the political independence of news outlets, market plurality, and the social inclusiveness of the Romanian media sector. The work carried out in 2017 consisted in updating some of the indicators

from the 2016 report, and documenting newly introduced indicators on topics like the protection of whistle-blowers. In this process, we consulted a panel of national experts in different areas and included their assessment of the current legal and de facto media situation in Romania.

The problems we identified in previous editions of the report persist in 2017; they are related to the concentration of cross-media ownership, media literacy, political interference in controlling media ownership, the independence of the public service media and even the protection of journalists. For this reason, in our 2017 report we try to address these concerns with a set of recommendations based on our research, related to PSM regulation improvements, general funding regulations and the self-regulation of the journalistic profession.

MPM is an annual project, co-financed by the European Commission and coordinated by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) at the European University Institute (EUI).

EUENGAGE 2017

2017 was also the third year of implementing the EUENGAGE research project, which uses a multi-dimensional and multi-method approach to explore how better links between supranational EU governance and popular mobilisation at the national level would be possible.

To develop these ideas, the project first built an understanding of the behaviour of all actors involved: political and business elites, citizens, political parties and mass media. In terms of the latter, over the course of 2017 we collected a large amount of data from 30 different media outlets in ten European countries on four topics: Brexit, immigration, economy and security. Based on this data, we have been analysing the way in which the EU was reflected in these media outlets, the differences in how these topics were presented across these countries and the visibility and sentiment towards the EU. For this, we conducted an automated text analysis on news articles and applied text-processing techniques, topic models and clustering algorithms and descriptive statistics operations, using a bag-of-words approach to text. This resulted in 2 working papers that were started in 2017 and will be delivered in their final form in 2018.

MRC is part of a large consortium of partners within the EUENGAGE project, which is financed through the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme.

Reward for Horizon 2020 participation

As an extension to the EUENGAGE project, in 2017 we obtained a grant that allowed us to include Romanian news outlets in the analysis carried out in the larger European project. To this end, we selected the outlets to be included, built customized crawlers and downloaded the news articles on the same 4 topics as in EUENGAGE, using the same syntax of words, adapted to the Romanian language. At the end of 2017 the project ended and we delivered a working paper with the results of the analysis for Romania, compared with part of the data from the other EU countries.

The project was funded by a national grant in the programme Awarding Participation in Horizon2020 - PN-III-CEI-SUPPORT-PO.

Less Hate More Speech: An Experimental and Comparative Study 2017

2017 was the fourth year of the Less Hate, More Speech (LHMS) research project, which aimed to examine 'the role political elites and mass media play, intentionally or unintentionally, in reducing or promoting anti-democratic and intolerant discourse among the citizens.' (LHMS blog 2014)

In this fourth, and final, stage of the project we continued the analysis of the rich data collected in the previous phases and advanced the writing of reports and papers.

LHMS public opinion published reports

A series of working papers by MRC researchers emerged from the Less Hate More Speech project. The following was added to them in 2017:

■ ADID (anti-democratic intolerant discourse) in Romania: A longitudinal approach

The report examines data from over fifty public opinion surveys conducted in Romania to describe the variation in Anti-Democratic and Intolerant Discourse (ADID) across socio-demographic groups from a longitudinal perspective. The analysis concludes that anti-Roma sentiment appears to be quite strong and resilient among the Romanian population, with little difference in intensity between young and old, or between highly educated and less educated individuals. On the other hand, the data also reveal that anti-LGBT attitudes, albeit highly prevalent, are more sensitive to education and age, thus suggesting that there is room for nurturing tolerance and acceptance of "otherness", granted the right approach is pursued.

■ LHMS public opinion papers

A number of papers and reports that were initialised in 2016 were completed or updated in this final year of the project. This includes two academic papers based on public opinion data dealing with the determinants of anti-democratic and intolerant attitudes of Romanian citizens, and the impact of issue framing and elite discourse

on these attitudes. The papers show that there is a strong common core of determinants of intolerant socio-political attitudes that apply to all 'outgroups' that are either minority groups of citizens or refugees. This core predisposition relates to culturally bound 'othering' and cultural identity issues and to a lesser extent to economic fears, and cannot be explained away as a matter of lived experience or natural inter-group conflicts. The role of elites in public opinion formation is reflected in all the papers, as is the possibility of facilitating the expression of more tolerant attitudes with frames that are strong enough to call upon deeply anchored humanitarian values as well as through simple prompting for a stop and think moment.

The **first** academic paper examined what factors can explain anti-refugee settlement attitudes among Romanians, and, through experiments, tested the effect of different messages to find what can make people more tolerant of accepting refugees. A first version of this paper had been presented at the ECPR General Conference in Prague in 2016, but the paper was updated with new data from the Romanian Election Study conducted after the December 2016 elections. We found that the same kinds of factors that explain support for restrictive immigration and asylum policies in other countries also explain the rejection of refugees in Romania: preferences for a more homogeneous society, the rejection of minorities and, to a lesser degree, negative views on the state of the economy. More importantly, appealing to a Christian duty to help those in need significantly reduced opposition to refugee

reception, indicating that moral arguments can successfully be used to bolster support for solidarity with asylum seekers, as long as such arguments tap into widely shared values.

A **second** paper was built on a draft prepared for presentation at the European Consortium for Political Research and the American Political Science Association conferences in 2016, but included new statistical modelling and a near-complete rewrite as we had access to new data. Using data from both the LHMS and the RES citizens' surveys, the paper examines the anti-democratic and intolerant beliefs of Romanian citizens, focusing on the denial of fundamental rights to members of out-groups and the contribution of partisanship and media exposure on top of the classical attitudinal and demographic determinants. The study highlights that, despite certain differences in the level of intolerance faced by various Romanian minority groups, the main determinants of intolerance are largely the same across the six target groups of analysis. The determinants include authoritarianism, low trust, and an exclusionary view of national identity, while political knowledge decreases support for denial of rights.

LHMS book draft

Work on the **book manuscript** began in 2016 and continued during the first half of 2017. It is currently titled "Less hate, more speech – how can norms of civility and tolerance be institutionalised online in a socially and politically polarized new democracy and media system?" The book looks at whether, and how, norms of civility and tolerance

can be institutionalised online and how, at each stage, the process depends on the interactions between the characteristics and behaviour of the multiple non-unitary actors involved (journalists, moderators, media outlets, researchers, the audience, commenters, and the wider public). It centres around the moderation process that was introduced on big mainstream popular sites in Romania - what were the challenges and why they occurred -- thereby illuminating factors that are generally valid as well as factors that are contingent on contextual characteristics.

LHMS elite discourse and media papers

With respect to strength and the determinants of anti-prejudice norms among Romanian political elites, the analyses carried out on a sample of Romanian Members of Parliament and on parliamentary candidates revealed a number of salient findings. These analyses illustrated that, in Romania, political elites' anti-prejudice norms tend to be stronger than those of citizens and tend to co-vary predictably with factors related both to their socio-demographic attributes, their district characteristics and their political attitudes. In particular, Romanian female politicians have a higher motivation to control prejudice than men. Nationalist MPs and candidates, who are more pessimistic with respect to human nature and altruism, tend to be less motivated to control prejudice. Last but not least, candidates who have a higher share of Roma among their constituents also tend to display stronger anti-prejudice norms. All these findings were included in a working paper.

Having finalized the first round of data collection for the third wave of the European Media Systems Survey, in 2017 we drafted a **working paper** on the relation between media system characteristics, information quality and anti-democratic and intolerant discourse using data from the experts we interviewed. The resulting working paper includes 35 media contexts (34 countries, as Belgium is treated as two separate contexts) and it looks at two aspects following the objectives. First it examines the media system dimensions theoretically expected to be less likely to encourage ADID in the media; second, it links the factors related to information quality and journalistic norms with the expert assessment of the existence of ADID in the media.

In 2017 we also finalised work on an **academic paper** that focused on the impact of political party discourse on the expression of anti-democratic intolerant views among citizens. The paper was presented at the 2017 international conference SCOPE: Science of Politics.

The goal of the analyses was to understand the extent to which Romanian citizens' attitudes towards minorities and democracy change if politicians use civil and civically-minded discourse and, thus, at least pay lip service to the ideas of tolerance, inclusion and the protection of minorities; or, conversely, if they make intolerant, nationalist or negative statements about minorities. Our research showed that simple exposure to statements made by politicians can influence the expression of intolerant and anti-

democratic discourse by citizens, although the type of frames used by the political leader and the direction of the messages do not seem to make much of a difference. Also, Romanian citizens seemed more easily persuaded to endorse more tolerant views on some issues (related to the Roma minority and to democratic procedures) than on others (i.e. the group rights of the Hungarian minority).

LHMS media and comment-related activities and outputs in 2017

■ Analysis of journalistic content - user comments relationship

In 2017 MRC staff also worked on a research paper examining the relationship between journalistic content and user engagement on Facebook. We conducted a content analysis of 350 official posts from the Facebook page of investigative journalist and Gazeta Sporturilor chief editor Catalin Tolontan, as well as over 38,000 comments made in response to these posts. So far, the results indicate that posts containing "hard news" generate more engagement in the form of comments, as well as more civil and high-quality discourse, while sensationalist or click-bait style posts are less conducive to active and civil engagement. This suggests that the audience is prepared to engage with quality journalistic content if the proper conditions are there, and if journalistic elites take actions that are conducive to genuine and civil debate.



Part of the LHMS results

■ Report on comment moderation and comment-section experiments

This report, aimed at an audience of journalists, media experts, researchers and others interested in learning about how to reduce incivility and encourage productive dialogue in the comment section, explains our activities in the comment sections of the “Less Hate” participating websites (GSP.ro, Tolo.ro, Blogspot.ro and Paginademedia.ro). Published in January 2017, it explains some key concepts that informed our moderation, such as intolerance or prejudice, and lays out the goals and the principles behind the moderation procedures MRC researchers developed in collaboration with the GSP journalists and comment moderators. It also explains what is moderated (e.g. racial slurs and incitement to discrimination), what is not (e.g. off topic comments) and the relevant considerations in making decisions about what user-generated content to allow. Additionally, it describes the other experiments and features implemented in the comment section as part of the project, such as the introduction of pop-up messages warning about moderation and allowing people to edit their comments for compliance, the enabling of comment reaction buttons and the introduction of comment highlighting by moderators or authors to set apart the best contributions posted below the line.

■ Analysis of comment section innovations

We analysed the impact of a number of comment section tools introduced in 2016 to the “Less Hate” websites with a view to increasing interactivity with the audience and encouraging high quality

contributions. First, we looked into the effect of comment reaction buttons (like, respect and flag) enabled for GSP.ro users. We found that users whose posts draw more attention in the form of replies from other users also generate more like and respect reactions, and people appear to use the like and respect button in similar ways. We also examined the use and effect of the highlighting function on GSP.ro, a feature that allows moderators or authors to forefront the most valuable user-generated content (highlighted comments go to the top of the comment section, where they are featured in a colourful box). According to our findings, the comments staff highlight tend to be longer and elicit more engagement from the other users, in the form of replies, respects and likes. Users who are less often moderated - as a share of their total comments -, who post lengthier comments and have GSP.ro accounts (instead of commenting via Facebook) tend to have more highlighted comments than their peers.

■ Focus groups with commenters

We followed up the surveys of GSP.ro and Tolo.ro commenters conducted in 2016 with a few online focus groups with some of these users in 2017, in which the discussion centred on civility in the comment section and comment moderation. The participants were diverse in terms of user profiles (e.g. length of relationship with the sites or commenting frequency), but they were all highly engaged and by and largely supportive of the existence of comment moderation, although not entirely uncritical, especially when it came to the perceived harshness of moderation. The

participants also seemed better able to recognize the sexism present in comment sections, compared to racism.

■ Comment moderation quizzes

To illustrate the “Less Hate” comment moderation rules and engage people in a playful learning process about the distinction between garden-variety insults and serious incivility or intolerance, we produced three moderation quizzes (in Romanian). The first two, launched in February and August 2017 respectively, used real-life comments from the websites moderated in the project as inspiration, while the third, launched in October 2017, challenged people to apply the same moderation standards to controversial statements by Romanian politicians. The quizzes were filled out over 3,300 times in 2017. In 70% of cases people took the time to complete the entire quiz, and on average, they got 5 out of 7 questions right.

EVENTS

The work that the Median Research Centre has been doing since it was established in 2003 has been focused on reaching the wider public by making the wealth of knowledge in the social sciences available in an accessible manner, and applying it to real life situations. This was also true for the events we organised over the past year, which focussed on a range of topics and aimed at different target groups. While most events we organised over the past year took place in Romania, some happened in Budapest, in Hungary, as well. At the beginning of the year, we put together two events at the Central European University (CEU)

in Budapest. A Less Hate, More Speech Workshop was held in February with academics, students and journalists interested in our experience in moderating online comments for news media outlets in Romania. The leader of the Norwegian team in the above-mentioned project also spoke at a seminar co-organised by CEU and MRC, on what unites the electorally successful populist radical right in Western Europe.

Then, in April, the final event of the Less Hate, More Speech project took place. The participants included MRC researchers, a comment moderator

who worked throughout the project, representatives of the media partners (Gazeta Sporturilor and Paginademedia.ro) and of the Ministry of Research and Innovation (MCI), as well as guests from organizations that have had initiatives tackling anti-democratic and anti-minority public discourse.

In May, MRC's researchers organised a workshop during the SCOPE Conference held by the University of Political Sciences in Bucharest, where they talked about the role of media and political elites in fostering tolerant and pro-democratic citizens.



Less Hate, More Speech Workshop - February 2017, Budapest



SCOPE Conference - May 2017, Bucharest



Final event Less Hate, More Speech - April 2017, Bucharest



MEDIAN RESEARCH CENTRE IN MEDIA

The communication strategy for the organisation during 2017 was connected with the main projects we developed over the year as well as with the reality of the available budget for promotion activities. Thus, in spite of a small advertising budget, we were able to maintain a good level of visibility in the press as well as on social media by participating in several events, securing fruitful media partnerships, offering our expertise and promoting our research through accessible tools and clear and insightful reports.

Several national news outlets, including Dilema Veche, Pagina de media, GSP.ro, Radio Romania Cultural or Tolo.ro mentioned our work in various reporting, as did international news outlets, including an interview about the Less Hate, More Speech research project we did for the Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso in Italy. Others, like Pagina de media, gave eye-opening insights into the daily lives of online comment moderators who worked on the aforementioned research project.

Our constant dedication to making our work easily accessible and our determination to present well-argued analyses of topics of interest to the public were rewarded by journalists who sought our expertise and who shared our work through, for example, the online quizzes we developed throughout the year as a learning and testing tool for the public concerning online hate speech and incivility and how to recognize them.

FINANCIAL RESULTS

This section details significant resolutions adopted or endorsed by the management team during 2017. Budgets are prepared, reviewed and approved annually. During the year, progress is monitored on a monthly basis and adjustments are made with prior approval to reflect reality. Each project developed by MRC has a project manager who is also responsible for monitoring the expenditure for each activity against the approved budget with the help of the financial and accounting department. MRC has a set of internal policies

regarding the authorisation of expenditure, payments and acquisitions.

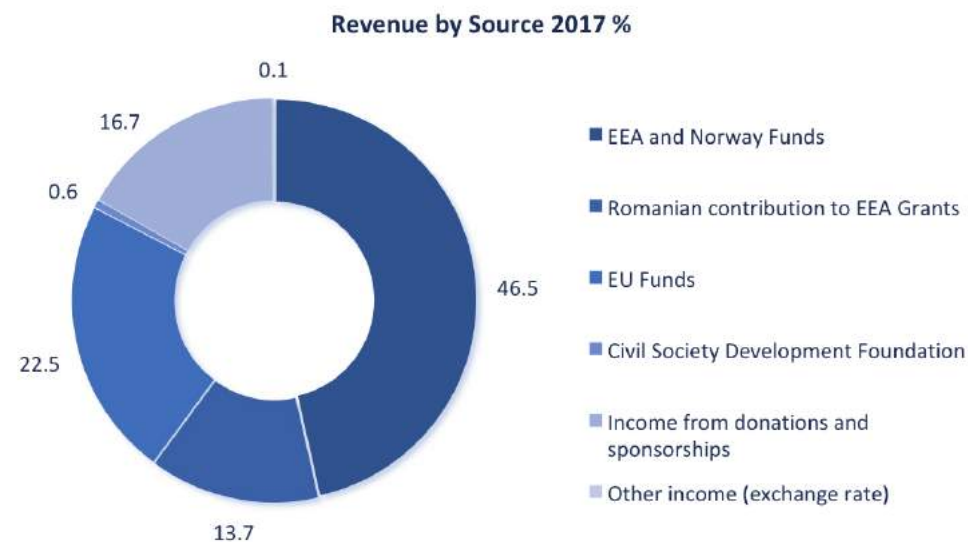
In 2017 the biggest revenue source was the EAA and Norway funds, followed by EU funds and those provided by the Romanian government (as part of its agreement with the Donor States in the Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 to provide 15% of winning research projects' eligible budgets and through the award for participating in Horizon 2020 research projects).

Income and expenditure	LEI	EURO
Total income	717.892,00	154.064,00
Total expenditure	707.973,00	151.935,32
Excess	9.919,00	2.128,68

Balance Sheet	LEI	EURO
Total assets	427.990,00	91.849,26
Total liabilities	410.064,00	88.002,23
Net assets	17.926,00	3.947,50

Revenue by source	LEI	EURO	%
EEA and Norway Funds	333.519,00	71.575,21	46,5
Romanian contribution to EEA Grants	98.070,00	21.046,42	13,7
EU Funds	161.510,00	34.661,03	22,5
Civil Society Development Foundation	4.205,00	902,42	0,6
Income from donations and sponsorships	119.985,00	25.749,51	16,7
Other income (exchange rate)	603,00	129,41	0,1
Total Income	717.892,00	154.064,00	100

Expenses	LEI	EURO	%
Personnel costs	353.259,00	75.811,53	49,9
Subcontracting	271.854,00	58.341,52	38,4
Marketing	604,00	129,62	0,1
Travel	38.995,00	8.368,56	5,5
Overhead	43.261,00	9.284,07	6,1
Total expenses	707.973,00	151.935,32	100



MANAGEMENT

CORE TEAM

Board Members: **Borbála Kovács, Gábor Tóka, Marina Popescu**

President and Founder: **Marina Popescu**

Executive Director: **Roxana Bodea**

Financial Manager: **Mihai Grigore**

Research Director: **Mihail Chiru**

Accountant: **Elena Buzatu**

Senior Researchers: **Tania Chilin, Oana Lup, Adina Marincea, Robert Sata, Raluca Toma**

Junior Researchers: **Nathaniel Brophy, Cristina Mihalachi, Laura Trandafir**

Project Manager: **Sorina Slusarec**

Designer: **Nicoleta Nasta**

COLLABORATORS

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Marina Popescu
President & Founder



Gábor Tóka
Board Member



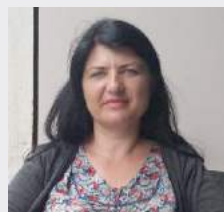
Borbála Kovács
Board Member



Roxana Bodea
Executive Director



Mihai Grigore
Financial Manager



Elena Buzatu
Accountant



Nathaniel Brophy
Junior Researcher



Tania Chilin
Senior Researcher



Mihai Chiru
Research Director



Oana Lup
Senior Researcher



Adina Marincea
Senior Researcher



Cristina Mihalachi
Junior Researcher



Nicoleta Nasta
Designer



Robert Sata
Senior Researcher



Sorina Slusarec
Project Manager



Raluca Toma
Senior Researcher



Laura Trandafir
Junior Researcher

MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW

In 2017, the management team focussed on monitoring the daily operations of the organisation, tracking the budget implementation of the four ongoing projects and adjusting the framework, following up on procedures for an optimal workflow, minimising overlaps and securing personnel for new supporting positions.

Management also lead efforts relating to successfully closing two of our projects Less Hate, More Speech and Awarding Participation in Horizon 2020 Projects. This also meant providing support throughout the external audit.

HUMAN CAPITAL

Median Research Centre is committed to attracting a diverse workforce, as well as ensuring equality and inclusiveness. From the get go we wanted to create an international working environment where different cultures can interact and be part of international projects that open up possibilities for the organisation and its members in order to remain flexible, active and connected,

not just to local issues, but to European and international issues too.

Aside from inherent staff fluctuations on different projects, the core team remained largely unchanged compared to the previous year, with one addition, a junior researcher and Fulbright fellow. Due to the closing of one of our big projects in April 2017, several

contracts uniquely related to it ended, but most of them remain part of our collaborators' network. Most of our staff resided in Romania, but during this year we also had people living in Hungary as well as people of Spanish, American and Moldavian nationalities join our team.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ensuring our team develops professionally in their respective fields is essential to our values at the Median Research Centre. We support curiosity and knowledge and are committed to offer our staff the chance to progress, pick up new skills and stay connected to the most recent developments in their field of interest.

With this in mind, starting in 2014, we designed and implemented the Continuous Professional Development Program (CPDP). This is an initiative meant to give access to training and development to all our team, through attending classes, seminars or workshops held either by external vetted organisations or by our own most senior researchers.

Thus, in 2017, six of our team members attended such classes, both in Romania and internationally. The subjects covered in these programs ranged from multivariate statistics, qualitative and quantitative research methods or text analysis methods to media audience engagement and legacy media's developments in the digital world.