

Conference Program

Whose Media, Whose Interests?

—
Ownership,
Public Sphere
and Online Space

September 18, 2016,
Václav Havel Library
Ostrovní 13, Prague



CONFERENCE'S AIM AND FOCUS

The aim of the conference is to critically reflect upon some of the main issues which currently surround debates about the performance of media in the Czech Republic and Central Europe in general, namely the changing models of media ownership, the independence of public service broadcasting, as well as the spreading of disinformation and propaganda via the social network sites. Across the region, a large number of commercial media have recently undergone a process of ownership transformation, characterized by departure of established international investors and their replacement by local businessmen, many of whom are advancing their own political interests.

While causing concerns for the future of journalistic freedom and autonomy under the new, economically powerful and politically connected proprietors this development also highlights the importance of preserving and nurturing journalistic professionalism and political independence of public service media, counterbalancing the tendencies towards instrumentalization and politicization of the commercial media domain. Online media and social networks represent a new player in the field with massive and instant reach. At the same time, they are more vulnerable to disinformation and propaganda than traditional media.

The conference brings together internationally renowned experts and media practitioners, as well as local decision makers and government representatives, in order to debate the above mentioned issues and the challenges they represent for the future of democracy in the Czech Republic and in the region. At the same time, we hope the discussions will lead to practical recommendations to resolve the current issues.

OUTLINE OF THE PROGRAM

9:30 Registration at Václav Havel Library, Ostrovní 13

10:00–10:15 Welcome and Introduction

Michael Žantovský, Executive Director, Václav Havel Library

Pavel Bělobrádek, Deputy Prime Minister for Science,
Research and Innovation

10:15–12:15 Media Ownership and Journalistic Autonomy

Keynote **John Lloyd**, Contributing editor, Financial Times; Senior Research
Fellow, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

Panelists **Matůš Kostolný**, Editor-in-Chief, Daily N

Tamás Bodoky, Editor-in-Chief, Atlatzso.hu

Petr Kamborský, Chief Columnist, Lidové Noviny

Roman Latuske, Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO,
Economia, a.s

Dalibor Balšínek, Editor-in-Chief, Echo24 and Echo magazine

Moderator **Václav Štětka**, Lecturer, Loughborough University;
Senior Researcher, Charles University in Prague

12:15–13:15 lunch break

13:15–15:15

The Role and Independence of Public Service Media

Keynote

Christian Nissen, Adjunct Professor, Copenhagen Business School

Panelists

Jacek Żakowski, journalist, Polityka weekly

Filip Rožánek, Editor-in-Chief, Marketing & Media

István Hegedűs, Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society

Moderator

David Levy, Director, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism,
University of Oxford

15:15–15:45

coffee break

15:45–17:45

New Media, Propaganda and Manipulation

Keynote

Brian Whitmore, senior Russia analyst and author of Power Vertical
Blog, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty

Panelists

Ivana Smoleňová, researcher, Prague Security Studies Institute

Monika Richter, researcher, University of Oxford

Kristina Potapova, analyst, Wilfried Martens Centre
for European Studies

Jindřich Šídlo, journalist, Seznam.cz

Moderator

Michael Žantovský, Executive Director, Václav Havel Library

17:45–18:00

Closing remarks

Jiří Schneider, Executive Director, Aspen Institute Prague

SPEAKERS' BIO-NOTES



Michael Žantovský

Executive Director, Václav Havel Library

Michael Žantovský is the Executive Director of Václav Havel Library in Prague and Vice-President of Aspen Institute Prague. Previously he was the Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the United Kingdom (2009–2015) to Israel (2003–2009) and to the United States (1992–1997).



Pavel Bělobrádek

Deputy Prime Minister for Science,
Research and Innovation

Pavel Bělobrádek currently serves as the Czech Republic's Deputy Prime Minister for Science, Research and Innovation and as Chairman of the Research, Development and Innovation Council. He leads the Christian Democratic Union - Czechoslovak People's Party.



John Lloyd

Contributing editor, *Financial Times*; Senior Research Fellow, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism

John Lloyd is a contributing editor to the *Financial Times* and Senior Research Fellow at Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Throughout his remarkable career he has written many pamphlets, essays and books (including *What the Media are doing to our Politics*, 2004) and he has been awarded with several journalist awards.



Tamás Bodoky

Editor-in-Chief, *Atlatzo.hu*

Tamás Bodoky founded the investigative news website *Atlatzo.hu* to promote free press in Hungary. In 2014 *Atlatzo.hu* was put on the government's NGO blacklist, but Bodoky continues to run the site, as well as workshops to help keep investigative journalism in Hungary alive.



Matúš Kostolný

Editor-in-Chief, *Daily N*

Matúš Kostolný worked in the leading Slovak daily newspaper *SME* between 1994 and 2014 firstly as foreign policy editor, and for the last eight years as Editor-in-Chief. Currently he is Editor-in-Chief of the daily journal *Denník N*.



Petr Kamberský

Chief Columnist, *Lidové noviny*

Petr Kamberský is the Chief Columnist at the *Lidové noviny* daily. His career as a journalist started in *Mladá fronta DNES*. Since 2005, he has alternately led the comment sections of the dailies *Hospodářské noviny* and *Lidové noviny* – where he was also the Editor-in-Chief of the Saturday special *Orientace*. He holds a degree in sociology from Charles University in Prague.



Roman Latuske

Chairman of the Board of Directors and CEO, Economia, a.s

Roman Latuske studied banking at IHK Wiesbaden specializing in real estate finance. Since 1998 he has worked in the media industry. In the media group MAFRA he was involved in building the news portal iDNES.cz and was a board member responsible for the division MAFRA DIGITAL. Since 2004 he is the CEO of Economia and responsible for the final integration of Centrum Holdings and transformation of the publishing house into a digital media house.



Václav Štětka

Lecturer, Loughborough University; Senior Researcher, Charles University in Prague

Václav Štětka is Senior Researcher and Leader of the PolCoRe research group at the Institute of Sociological Studies at Charles University in Prague, and since June 2016 also lecturer at Loughborough University in the United Kingdom. His research interests encompass media ownership, political communication and the role of new media, and transformation of media systems in Central and Eastern Europe.



Christian Nissen

Adjunct Professor, Copenhagen Business School

Christian Nissen currently serves as Adjunct Professor at the Copenhagen Business School and is a member of the Danish Public Service Media Committee set up by the Parliament to investigate the future role of Danish public media. Previously, he was Associate Professor in International Politics at the University of Copenhagen and served as Director General of the Danish Broadcasting Corporation (1994–2004). Between 1997 and 2001 he chaired the EBU Digital Strategy Group. Nissen was also a member of the Editorial Commission for the Open Society Foundation projects (2009–2014).



Dalibor Balšínek

Editor-in-Chief, Echo24 and Echo magazine

Dalibor Balšínek is publisher and Editor-in-Chief of the online news portal Echo24 and Echo magazine. In the past he served as Editor-in-Chief of Lidové noviny and he was responsible for digital activities of MAFRA group. Moreover, he held the position of Chief of PR Department at TV Nova, founded the Instinkt magazine, and served as Editor-in-Chief of the Týden magazine.



Jacek Żakowski

Journalist, Polityka weekly

Jacek Żakowski is a Polish journalist and writer, one of the founders of Gazeta Wyborcza. He works as commentator for the weekly Polityka and as a host of his own show on the radio Tok FM. Since 1999 he has been the Chief of the Department of Journalism at Collegium Civitas in Warsaw.



István Hegedűs

Chairman, Hungarian Europe Society

István Hegedűs is the Chairman of Hungarian Europe Society. In 1989 he participated at the Hungarian National Roundtable Negotiations as a delegate of the opposition groups in the media committee. He became a liberal member of the first freely elected Hungarian Parliament in 1990. Later he started to work as a freelance scholar and lecturer in several higher education institutions. He received his Ph. D. in sociology at Corvinus University of Budapest in 2004.



Filip Rožánek

Editor-in-Chief, Marketing & Media

Filip Rožánek is a media analyst, journalist and expert on new media. Since July 2015 he has been the Editor-in-Chief of the weekly magazine Marketing & Media, the largest and most read Czech communication industry publication. Previously he worked in the Hospodářské noviny daily and in Czech Radio. He received the Czech Journalist Award in 2014 for a project that repeated the armed invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, using social media tools.



David Levy

Director, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford

Since 2008 David Levy has been Director of the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. Besides covering the full range of issues around developments in journalism, he has particular expertise in public service broadcasting, media regulation and the interaction between digital technology and media regulation both within the UK and Europe.



Brian Whitmore

Senior Russia Analyst, Radio Free Europe/
Radio Liberty

Brian Whitmore is a Senior Russia Analyst for Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. He is the author of The Power Vertical Blog and The Power Vertical Podcast, both of which focus on Russian affairs. Prior to joining RFE/RL in 2007, Brian worked for eight years for the Boston Globe, first in the Globe's Moscow bureau and later as Central and Eastern European correspondent based in Prague. Before that he was a political correspondent and columnist for The Moscow Times and its sister publication The St. Petersburg Times.



Ivana Smoleňová

Researcher, Prague Security Studies Institute

Ivana Smoleňová's fields of expertise include the geopolitics of Russia, its use of soft power projection and hybrid warfare tactics in Eastern Europe, in particular the pro-Russian disinformation and propaganda in the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Prior to joining PSSI, she worked for the Forum 2000 Foundation, Aspen Institute Prague and with the RWR Advisory Group in Washington D.C.



Monika Richter

Researcher, University of Oxford

Monika Richter recently completed an MPhil in European Politics at the University of Oxford, St Antony's College, and holds an MA in International Relations and Philosophy from the University of St Andrews. Her academic research centres on the effectiveness of Russian international propaganda with Western audiences, particularly in the US and Britain.



Kristina Potapova

Analyst, Wilfried Martens Centre
for European Studies

Kristina Potapova holds an MSc in European Public Policy from University College London and a BA in International Relations from the University of Essex in the UK. She focuses on research in the area of Russia's influence in the EU and Russia's information warfare at the Martens Centre.



Jindřich Šídlo

Journalist, Seznam.cz

Jindřich Šídlo is a journalist and political commentator. He recently left a position of editor at Hospodářské noviny journal and started to work at Seznam.cz. Throughout his career he worked as a contributing editor to Respekt magazine and MF Dnes journal, as well as political analyst and Editor-in-Chief of Local News Department at Czech Television.



Jiří Schneider

Executive Director, Aspen Institute Prague

Jiří Schneider is the Executive Director of Aspen Institute Prague. He entered public life after democratic changes in 1989 when he was elected to the Czechoslovak Parliament (Federal Assembly) in 1990 and 1992. In 1993 he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and held various positions at the Czech diplomatic service. Most prominently he served as Ambassador to Israel (1995-1998) and First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Czech Republic (2010-2014).

NOTES

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