

Mapping Media for Future Democracies

Grant Agreement number: 101094984

DELIVERABLE 2.2

**Analytical Models for Examining Media Supply and
Demand Side and the Legal and Regulatory Context of
Both Sides: Operationalization Proposals**

Nico Carpentier und Jeffrey Wimmer

with contributions by Josef Seethaler, Beata Klimkiewicz and Panos
Kompatsiaris



**Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are
however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect
those of the European Union or the European Research Executive
Agency. Neither the European Union nor the European Research
Executive Agency can be held responsible for them.**

Document Information

Project	
<i>Grant Agreement no.</i>	101094984
<i>Funding scheme</i>	HORIZON Research and Innovation Actions
<i>Project title</i>	Mapping Media for Future Democracies
<i>Project acronym</i>	MeDeMAP
<i>Project starting date</i>	01/03/2023
Document	
<i>Work package no.</i>	2
<i>Work package title</i>	Theoretical Embedding
<i>Work package lead beneficiary</i>	CU
<i>Task(s)</i>	2.2
<i>Deliverable no.</i>	2.2
<i>Deliverable title</i>	Analytical Models for Examining Media Supply and Demand Side and the Legal and Regulatory Context of Both Side
<i>Deliverable type</i>	DEM
<i>Contractual date of deliverable</i>	29/02/2024
<i>Actual date of deliverable</i>	30/01/2024
<i>Editor(s)</i>	
<i>Author(s)</i>	Nico Carpentier (CU), Jeffrey Wimmer (CU)
<i>Reviewer(s)</i>	Manuel José Damásio (Lusófona), Beata Klimkiewicz (JU), Andrea Miconi (IULM), Helmut Peissl (COMMIT), Josef Seethaler (OEAW)
<i>Version</i>	1.0
<i>Status</i>	Final
<i>Total number of pages (including cover)</i>	47
<i>Dissemination level</i>	Public

Deliverable 2.2
Analytical Models for Examining Media Supply and Demand Side and the Legal and Regulatory Context of Both Sides:
Operationalization Proposals
 By Nico Carpentier and Jeffrey Wimmer
 With contributions by Josef Seethaler, Beata Klimkiewicz and Panos Kompatsiaris

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2

PART 1: REPORTS FROM THE WPS HOW D2.1 WAS USED IN THE FIRST TASKS 5

1. HOW D2.1 WAS USED FOR TASK 3.1, “MAPPING LEGAL AND (SELF-)REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION” 5

2. HOW D2.1 WAS USED FOR WP4, “MEDIA’S ROLE IN DEMOCRACY SEEN FROM A MEDIA SUPPLY SIDE” 8

 2.1 *Core Components*..... 8

 2.2 *Struggles*..... 8

 2.3 *Conditions of possibility* 10

 2.4 *Threats*..... 10

3. HOW D2.1 WAS USED FOR TASK 5.1, “A MAP OF AUDIENCE EVOLUTION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION” 11

4. HOW D2.1 WAS USED FOR TASK 5.2, “ASSESSING TRUST IN MEDIA AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN EUROPE” 13

PART 2: OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSALS 16

5. OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSAL FOR TASK 3.2..... 16

 5.1 *Task 3.2 in the original proposal*..... 16

 5.2 *The operationalization proposal for Task 3.2*..... 18

6. OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSAL FOR TASK 4.2..... 22

 6.1 *Task 4.2 in the original proposal*..... 22

 6.2 *The operationalization proposal for Task 4.2*..... 24

7. OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSAL FOR TASK 5.3..... 27

 7.1 *Task 5.3 in the original proposal*..... 27

 7.2 *The operationalization proposal for Task 5.3*..... 28

8. OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSAL FOR TASK 6.2..... 32

 8.1 *Task 6.2 in the original proposal*..... 33

 8.2 *The operationalization proposal for Task 6.2*..... 35

9. OPERATIONALIZATION PROPOSAL FOR TASK 6.3/6.4 38

 9.1 *Task 6.3/6.4 in the original proposal*..... 38

 9.2 *The operationalization proposal for Task 6.3/6.4* 40

AFTERTHOUGHTS..... 43

LITERATURE AND REFERENCES 43

Introduction and Executive Summary

In this Deliverable 2.2, “*The review of various forms of democratic political participation and the definition of the corresponding functions of the media*”, which has been condensed in the theoretical framework of Deliverable 2.1, is translated into a series of analytical-methodological reflections, so that they can “*be used as a foundation for the analytical models used in WP3, WP4 and WP5 (in cooperation with the respective lead participants).*” (description of Task 2.2 in original proposal, p. 30)

The expected content of this Deliverable 2.2 is described in the original proposal in the following terms:

“D2.2 will be (sic) translate the theoretical models, developed in D2.1, into analytical models that can be used for the empirical analysis organised in the other work packages. This will prevent a disconnection between theory and research, and will ensure that the empirical research is grounded in the academic literature.” (p. 31)

In practice, this deliverable was developed in a particular context. One important element is that the timing of Task 2.2, which structured the development of D2.2, was particular. Task 2.2 could only start after Task 2.1 (the development of the initial theoretical framework) had ended. Task 2.1 ended at the end of month 6, which meant that Task 2.2 could only start at month 7. It ran until month 12 of the project. The other Work Packages (WPs) could not wait, and as the overview of the different WPs and their timings shows (Figure 3.1, on p. 27 of the original proposal), they also started when the project started. In particular, Task 3.1 (WP3), Task 5.1 and Task 5.2 (WP5) all started on month 1 of the project. Task 4.1 (WP4) started according to this overview figure on month 4, while in the Task 4.1 description (p. 32), Task 4.1 also started at month 1. In all cases and versions, all these tasks started well before Task 2.2 could start. This is why this Deliverable 2.2, in Part 1, used an inversed strategy, where the WP leaders—or their colleagues to whom this assignment was entrusted—of WP3, WP4 and WP5 themselves reported on how the theoretical framework was used in their WPs, in relation to Task 3.1, 4.1, 5.1 and 5.2.

The second wave of tasks will mostly start in year 2 of the project, on month 13. One exception is Task 3.2, which has already started in month 10. But Task 3.2 (WP3), Task 4.2 (WP4) and Task 5.3 (WP5) will start at month 13. Even though, formally, WP6, which will start on month 17, is not mentioned in the task description of Task 2.2, we considered this WP a vital research component of the project, and the provision of theoretical support was deemed crucial. This is why, in Part 2 of this deliverable, we can find operationalization proposals—grounded in the theoretical reflections of Task 2.1—for Task 3.2, Task 4.2, Task 5.3, Task 6.2 and Task 6.3/4¹.

A second element is that any operationalization proposal for a large research project, which has received funding on the basis of an (approved) application, also needs to engage in a dialogue with this original proposal, as this proposal contains detailed task descriptions, which are part of the contractual agreement with the funding agency. For this reason, the operationalization proposals discussed in Part 2 always contain two subsections: First, the

¹ Task 6.1 is a “*Methodological report on successful practise of policy development with citizen parliaments in Europe*” (p. 35), and there is little need for theoretical support. Task 6.3 and Task 6.4 are discussed together, as they are too intertwined to be discussed separately. The discussion on Task 4.2 also has references to Task 4.3, without the full development of an operationalization proposal for Task 4.3.

task, as elaborated in the original proposal, is described, but also critically analysed. This critical analysis is vital—not to critique the original proposal, but to deal with the gaps which always occur in large project proposals, when they are structured through different WPs and have a dozen of teams active. These critical analyses of the original proposal are then integrated in the actual operationalization proposals, which can be found in the second subsection of each operationalization proposal section.

A third element which explains the particularity of this deliverable is that it crosses—and intends to cross—the boundaries of the different WPs. Even though this is desirable in a large, consortium-driven project, it also generates particular (potential) problems, as each of the WPs has their own team, with their own management structures of WP leaders and Task leaders, and with their own responsibilities and deliverables. Here, collaboration needs to be grounded in dialogue, with respect for the autonomy and decision-making powers of the different WPs. In other words, the WP2 team considered it undesirable to impose particular ideas—on how the theoretical framework should be implemented—on the other WP teams. Instead, the WP2 team opted for a strategy of elaborated suggestions, leaving the WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6 teams the final say on how to implement these suggestions in ‘their’ WPs. In other words, the authors of this deliverable chose to avoid putting any pressure on the other WPs, but instead wanted to engage in a dialogue, where, in very Habermasian terms, only the force of the better argument applied.

In practice, this meant that the subsections with the operationalization proposals for each of the five tasks were first sent to the respective WP leaders, asking them to express any immediate concerns and objections. In the case of WP leader protest, a remediation procedure was on stand-by, but it did not have to be activated. At a next step, at the upcoming consortium meeting, which will take place in Lisbon, Portugal, from 6 to 8 March 2024, four so-called one-on-one meetings, with the one of four WP leaders (for WP3, WP4, WP5 and WP6) and one representative of the author team of D2.1 and D2.2, will be organized, to continue this dialogue. This also means that the operationalization proposals in this Deliverable 2.2 remain very much work in progress, with the WP2 team also committed to providing theoretical support to the other WPs, in the years to come, as part of Task 2.4 (which runs until the end of the project).

Executive summary of suggestions in the five operationalization proposals

The operationalization proposals include the following components, which are further developed in the respective proposals.

Task 3.2

- resolve the few practical questions left (1) about the target numbers, (2) about the division of labour (between the national and European level), and whether other actor categories (e.g., journalist unions, media watchdogs and legal experts) need to be included;
- consider the interviews expert interviews, generated through theoretical sampling;
- develop the thematic focus of the interviews, using the main structure of D2.1 and strengthening the presence of participatory indicators that are public- or audience-centred.

Task 4.2

- select the expert interviewees, again using theoretical sampling, with two modifications of the original list and paying attention to the existence of different sub-entities in media organizations;
- further develop the relationship between the three first tasks of WP4, avoiding gaps;
- formulate a clear research question for the interviews;
- build the interview guide on the framework developed in D2.1;
- use guided and narrative interviews;
- start the “Media mapping blog”.

Task 5.3

- construct a closer connection between the Task 5.3 design and the (main structure of the) theoretical framework generated in WP2;
- take the general focus of the entire project—the study of the intersection of media and democracy—also as the starting point of Task 5.3;
- focus media repertoires only on media use that has democratic relevance (moving away from a media repertoires/consumption/use study only);
- resolve a series of methodological issues.

Task 6.2

- decide on the thematic focus of the citizen parliaments, with three subthemes;
- include the organization of the training component, fixating a more maximalist definition of democracy;
- acknowledge the need to analyse the citizen parliaments as a struggle over media’s role in democracy;
- use resolutions, majority decision-making and dissenting opinions in the citizen parliaments;
- protect the participation in and through the citizen parliaments.

Task 6.3/6.4

- ensure that there is sufficient theoretical support for the analysis of the citizen parliaments, by using the theoretical framework to support the evaluation the outcomes / resolutions and bringing in the core theoretical notion of struggle into the analysis, by performing an evaluation of the struggle over media’s roles in democracy;
- resolve the potential overlap between Task 6.4 and Task 2.4;
- differentiate the Task 6.4 analysis from Task 6.3 and D6.4 (the roadmap), by focussing on the analysis (and re-theorization) of the performance of participation, on the analysis (and re-theorization) of the construction of democracy and the analysis (and re-theorization) of the construction of media (all in the five countries);
- ensure that sufficient data is gathered, in order to allow for these analyses;
- develop the practical steps for the organization, analysis and dissemination of the citizen parliaments.

Part 1: Reports from the WPs how D2.1 was used in the first tasks

This Part 1 contains the reports of the WP leaders (or their colleagues) of WP3, WP4 and WP5, detailing how the theoretical framework—captured in D2.1—was deployed in the MeDeMAP tasks which had already started before Task 2.2 was initiated. This concerns Task 3.1, Task 4.1, Task 5.1 and Task 5.2.

1. How D2.1 was used for Task 3.1, “Mapping legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks in the European Union”

By Josef Seethaler

“*Rule of law guarantees fundamental rights and value*”² reads the website of the European Commission. About sixty years ago, Yehezkel Dror (1957, p. 440), a specialist in Public Administration Science, wrote: “*By its very nature, law consists of a number of norms which constitute obligatory rules of behavior for the members of the society. These legal norms are closely related to various social values, being either a direct expression of them or serving them in a more indirect way.*” Thus law, if it is not dead law, reflects generally accepted social values. However, only in recent years, debates about values – and in particular democratic values – that shape a European social order and counter or reflect social change have been intensifying (see, for example, Bühlmann et al., 2012; Kelbel et al., 2021; Konrath, 2023; Schnell, 2016).

In the following, I have attempted to link the concept for analysing the national legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks with the theoretically derived struggles and threats, defined by Carpentier and Wimmer (2023) and thus to make the frameworks assessable with regard to the **democratic values at stake in these struggles and against which a (growing?) number of threats are directed**. It is a first attempt to connect WP3 to WP2 that definitely needs discussion and revision.

Media law “*focuses on media as a means to disseminate information and ideas to a mass audience, and the persons disseminating such information and ideas.*” (Oster, 2017, p. 2; emphasis in original) Accordingly, it differentiates between the provision of content, which takes place in a particular way (‘editorial responsibility’) in journalistic media, the mere dissemination of (third-party) content, and the reception of information and ideas. Even if these functional areas and the (legal) persons involved (increasingly) overlap in reality, this differentiation between ‘content providers’, ‘journalistic media’, ‘intermediaries’, and ‘recipients’ is crucial as the rights that apply to each group are (partly) based on different legal grounds. In case of overlaps, all regulations apply to the functions concerned.

The fundamental principles underlying European media law(s) derive from the human rights and economic rights framework codified at an international, European, and EU level. Considering MeDeMAP’s main objectives, we refer to the human rights framework which is based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law. However, EU provisions on economic integration, which should be designed to recognize the importance of media

² https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/upholding-rule-law/rule-law_en

services for a democratic society, are also under scrutiny in an analysis of legal and regulatory frameworks. In doing so, two premises have to be taken into account.

Although to a large extent overlapping, freedom of expression and media freedom are “*distinct concepts*” (Oster, 2017, p. 38). While freedom of expression is a fundamental right that applies to all people, media freedom only applies to the journalistic media.³ Moreover, freedom of expression is a two-sided right: The right to receive information is a corollary of the right to freedom of expression and is at the centre of the rights of the recipients. The analysis of the legal and regulatory frameworks must take both distinctions into account.

Focusing on values that should be at the core of any legislation, there are a few but significant differences in the conventions that refer to freedom of expression:

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 19:

“1. Everyone shall have the right to hold opinions without interference.

2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice.

3. The exercise of the rights provided for in paragraph 2 of this article carries with it special duties and responsibilities. It may therefore be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:

(a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others;

(b) For the protection of national security or of public order (*ordre public*), or of public health or morals.” (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>)

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, Article 10
Freedom of expression:

“1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers. This Article shall not prevent States from requiring the licensing of broadcasting, television or cinema enterprises.⁴

2. The exercise of these freedoms, since it carries with it duties and responsibilities, may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society, in the interests of national security, territorial integrity or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, for the protection of the reputation or rights of others, for preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or for maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.”

(https://www.echr.coe.int/documents/d/echr/convention_ENG)

Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, Article 11: Freedom of expression and information

“1. Everyone has the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers.

2. The freedom and pluralism of the media shall be respected.” (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>)

While the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights generally refers to the “*dignity*” and “*the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family*” as “*the*

³ Since freedom of expression is the overriding right from which media freedom is derived, the wording on p. 57 of D2.1 may be misleading as it suggests that freedom of expression is subordinate to freedom of the media: “*Besides media freedom, also freedom of expression is a human right that is essential for democracy.*”

⁴ Article 3 of the First Protocol to the Convention adds that “*free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature*” must be ensured.

foundation of freedom, justice and peace” and the European Convention only reaffirmed the Covenant’s preamble, the EU Charta not only declares to be based on “*universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity*” (which represents a much broader approach), but remarkably adds “*pluralism of the media*” as an equivalent value to “*freedom of the media*” in Article 11. On the other hand, the European Convention contains restrictions to prevent the disclosure of confidential information and to safeguard the authority and impartiality of the judiciary – restrictions which are of great relevance for ensuring the implementation of the respective democratic values in the legislation.

In their reasoning, Carpentier and Wimmer (2023, p. 66) focus on three of the fundamental values mentioned in the European Convention when identifying the values of **freedom, equality and pluralism** as constituents of a “*democratic media culture*”. As such, they play “*key roles*” in the struggles over media’s democratic roles, their relationship and balance and – “*in their non-absolutist articulation*” – in their potential to ward off threats (ibid., p. 67). Carpentier and Wimmer discuss four struggles about how media **freedom** and media **pluralism** can or should be organized and how pluriform representation and participation can or should be constructed – which is ultimately linked to power and (in)equality. Vice versa, threats to media’s democratic roles are defined “*as deficits in achieving liberal democratic values*” (ibid., p. 69), with

- control over the media originating from political and economic actors, in particular from global platforms, and the lack of economic sustainability threatening media **pluralism**,
- loss of identity of professional journalism and increased verbal and physical violence against journalists, and the distribution of disinformation, fake news and conspiracy myths threatening **freedom of expression**,
- and growing limits to participation *through* and *in* (but not restricted to) online media as a result of various forms of disenchantment and various social digital divides threatening **equality**.

One could add, for example, that political propaganda against public funding of Public Service Media threatens **solidarity** (Donders, 2021, p. 62), and online harassment and trolling endanger human **dignity**.

Based on these considerations, the research design for the analysis of the legal and regulatory framework will consist of the following two axes: the vertical axis shows the values guiding the legal and regulatory measures as well as the corresponding indicators for struggles and threats, and the horizontal axis represents the democratic minimalism / maximalism dimension (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 82) along which the specific measures can be located. The three-part category scheme (as presented in Milan) will be dropped. This revised design is currently being developed.

2. How D2.1 was used for WP4, “Media’s role in democracy seen from a media supply side”

By Beata Klimkiewicz

This short contribution links to a media supply side and WP4 work some selected core components, struggles, conditions of possibility and threats attributed the media in a conceptual table provided by WP2.

2.1 Core Components

Articulation of Technology and Institution

The media supply side is institutionally embedded in a number of media outlets providing news to the general public. While in past, the media enjoyed quite a unique position in delivering these services to the public, currently growing communicative abundance has led to proliferation of a number of actors who offer similar functions as the news media. Many of them fulfil certain pro-democratic functions, but they often lack two crucial features of the media – institutional and professional autonomy and editorial control.

While in practice institutional/professional autonomy or editorial control can be compromised by political, economic, technological or other pressures, these still guarantee basic prerequisites for quality performance.

At the very basic level of the WP4 mapping, this refers to the definition of the news media embracing production and dissemination of the news, reaching the general public, enjoying editorial autonomy, following certain standards of journalistic production and accountability and being bound by normative and societal expectations (expressed e.g. in media laws and self-regulatory charters or in reference to e.g. pro-democratic media functions) (see more in the WP4 Media Definition Document).

Journalistic performance

‘Journalistic performance’ was not distinguished among the ‘core components of the media’ in the WP2 table, but this is a crucial element that enables the media to deliver ‘expected’ democratic functions. In a normative sense, journalistic performance is structured according to principles (e.g. fairness, accuracy, impartiality, etc.), practical production guidelines (e.g. on research, checking, editing, etc.) and standards of accountability (e.g. corrections and complaints, etc.). Again, how fully these standards are implemented in practice depends very much on democratic journalistic culture but also restraints and limitations (e.g. economic). The existence of journalistic standards – as exposed by media outlets on their websites - was mapped under WP4 and will be also part of further research conducted through interviews with media producers.

2.2 Struggles

Organization of media pluralism

For many years, media pluralism has served as an important principle of media governance at various levels: a macro level of media systems (diversity media structures, ownership

patterns), a meso level of media institutions and performance (diversity of professional perspectives, employment structures, transparency), and a micro level of media contents (diversity of sources, genres, viewpoints, representations) (see Klimkiewicz, 2009, for more). Media pluralism has also been interpreted through conceptual dichotomies or alternatives such as proportional/open, organized/spontaneous, polarized/moderate, evaluative/descriptive or reactive/interactive/proactive, but most significant in terms of policy development has been the distinction on external and internal pluralism. ‘External’ stands for diversity located outside a particular media entity (and diversity may thus be generated through various media outlets each expressing a different point of view), while ‘internal’ is seen to reside inside the media organization or unit, and basically reflects differentiation of contents and services offered (including diversity of values, interests, representations and views expressed) (see, e.g., Klimkiewicz, 2014).

In the WP4 work, structural pluralism refers to the organizational mapping according to three segments, which have different mandates – public service, private and non-profit sectors. The existence of these (well- or weakly developed) segments proves certain level of structural diversity, at least in terms of functions and funding. The WP4 research design also includes parameters of media ownership concentration, such as audience shares. At the level of content-related pluralism, this is linked to parameters of political orientation.

Degrees of Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression

Media freedom and freedom of expression are different concepts, and Damian Tambini’s *Media Freedom* (Polity Press, 2021) can be a helpful source to elaborate on these differences, also from the perspective of a changing media regulatory environment in Europe.

Degrees and Forms of Media Representation

More generally, the representative dimension refers to the media’s ability to reflect in an open manner various social actors, groups, their needs, interests and experiences. It also manifests through the way how various views on social and political reality are represented by the media supply, including its main components – public service, private and non-profit/community sector.

In WP4 work, this is reflected in parameters of political orientation, but also through the position and conditions of the third – non-profit – sector. How well is it embedded in a national media systems? What is its condition, resilience?

Degrees and Forms of Media Participation

Media participation can be understood as direct participation of media users who, e.g., engage in media production (most relevant for community media) but also indirect participation that goes beyond a mere consumption of content.

In the WP4 work, we develop the concepts of direct and indirect media participation where ‘direct’ refers to participation in journalistic production or ownership (e.g., ownership by a community), while ‘indirect’ is linked to a concept of engaging users with additional activities that may enable them to receive news content and services in a more ‘democratically’ active and conscious way (this is still work in progress). Indirect participation would engage users, e.g., with checking ownership or financial sources of the

media (so that the users know who is behind the news), standards of journalistic production and accountability (so that they know how the news is produced), membership of journalists or media outlets in relevant professional organizations (so that they can check whether journalists or outlets are institutionally recognized). Indirect participation may also enable users to respond, comment and complain.

2.3 Conditions of possibility

Communication Technologies and Infrastructures as Resources

Technological and economic resources create necessary conditions for media survival and resilience. Crisis in media viability and sustainability has deepened with the migration of advertising to digital platforms and the growing technological and infrastructural dependency of news media on platforms. This aspect is reflected only minimally in WP4 work with a question on sources of financing.

Democratic Media Culture

Democratic media culture reflects how pro-democratic media functions resonate with journalistic practice and how these translate to provision of news services. Three such functions play crucial role. The first can be seen as providing citizens with factual, relevant, accurate and timely information free from political bias and distortion (Raeijmaekers and Maesele, 2015; Schudson, 2017). Such information is a necessary prerequisite for meaningful political participation, that extends beyond voting and participation in the election. Secondly, the media are also expected to create ‘pluralistic fora’ for public debate (Habermas, 2006; Curran, 2002). Such fora should enable exchange of diverse opinions and views, and also experiences of various groups in a society. At the same time, there is a need of recognising a “*background common knowledge*” (Habermas, 2006), potentially bridging the polarizing divides. Finally, the media perform an important ‘watchdog’ role, monitoring both the state and corporate sectors for failures, wrongdoing and abuses of power (Curran, 2002). An attempt to hold governments to account implies that the media balance ‘information asymmetries’ with providing access to information and contents that would potentially be limited if exclusively controlled by politicians (Veltmer, 2013; Stiglitz, 2002).

Again in practice, such functions are compromised or even limited in various ways. The WP4 mapping explores some aspects of these in parameters on transparency (basic, advanced), standards of journalistic production, eventually the mandate – public, private, non-profit/community.

2.4 Threats

Colonization of the Public Sphere

‘Colonization’ of the public sphere or processes of ‘media capture’ contribute to erosion of legacy media. In the global and geopolitical context, there has been a rise of ‘news media initiatives’ that have exploited market and functional vulnerabilities of the legacy media, and have been used by authoritarian regimes as “*a dangerous tool to exert antidemocratic sharp power*” (Lucas, 2020, p. III). A global sphere witnessed an upsurge of state media, often under of populist governments, many of which have undermined the legitimacy of ‘Western mainstream’ media. In addition, much of media-like services aim at different outcomes than

providing information, e.g., dissemination of disinformation or propaganda (e.g., through automated content production), promotion of local politics (e.g., through local government-affiliated and financed media) and many others.

For these reasons, WP4 defined media outlets by distinguishing them from ‘paramedia’ or ‘news-like’ services.

Increase of Symbolic Violence and Polarization

In the public sphere, and more specifically, the news environment, polarization can be referred as ideological and opinion distancing of the news media manifested most significantly in their content, but also news production routines, setup of the journalistic community, opinions and attitudes represented by commentators as well as by media users. Symptoms of news media polarization might include distance between narratives about: social reality, political choices and decisions, historical paths, political or ideological principles, cultural values and social norms in a given political space. Such distance can take form of competition, but also mutual denial, leading to contradictory or mutually exclusive media coverage of the same events or phenomena (for more, see Klimkiewicz, 2021).

The WP4 mapping includes the information on ownership and political orientation that may help to understand some degree of polarization. In exceptional cases, polarization may be amplified by community media (see the example of Radio Maryja in Poland) or by PSM (e.g., TVP in Poland).

3. How D2.1 was used for Task 5.1, “A map of audience evolution in the European Union”

By Panos Kompatsiaris

Task 5.1 looks at media audiences and their evolution in Europe, drawing from various theoretical approaches and statistical data gathered from diverse sources. The Deliverable 2.1 was useful for this endeavour for several reasons, including the provision of a working definition of media, a brief but concise reading of the state of the art of media audiences as well as the contextualization of the above in the context of democracy and civic participation.

More precisely, Nico Carpentier and Jeffrey Wimmer employ a broad working definition of media as “*the technological-institutional assemblages that we as humans use to communicate across place and time*” (2023, p. 37). This definition, which is helpful for an emphasis on the everydayness of media that equally diversifies and pluralizes the notion of the audience, relies upon Kubicek’s notion of “*second order media*” (1997). For Kubicek, as Carpentier and Wimmer note, “*first-order media*” are “*technological systems with certain functions and potentials for the dissemination of information in the technical sense of the word*” (2023, p. 37); for example, such systems include the Internet and the protocols used for accessing it (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023). While the first order media refer to, broadly speaking, technological infrastructures, including hardware and software, second-order media adds the “*socio-cultural institutions of communication to the assemblage*” (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 37). In this sense, media are not simply technological devices, but the larger social apparatuses that legitimize and *make social use* of these devices and protocols. This is an important idea to stress in the context of audience studies; media became institutions of *use* and thus audiences are not only indispensable but in many ways a precondition for media to

exist. Indeed as Carpentier and Wimmer argue, as “*media are driven by the practice of communication, as signifying practices, they need an audience to complete their identity*” (2023, p. 38). The audiences that we study in this deliverable through interviews and focus groups are conceived via this idea of media that Carpentier and Wimmer emphasize, that is, their day-to-day implication in a variety of assemblages that consist both of technological as well as larger social, economic, cultural and political interweaving.

Another key idea that we found helpful in drafting this task is that the audience is always already plural, diverse, fragmented, fluid and in many ways “*ungraspable*” (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 38). The audience is, in other words, as Carpentier and Wimmer argue drawing on Allor, both everywhere and nowhere. To discuss this ungraspability of audiences, Carpentier and Wimmer borrow the questioning of types of audiences by Stephen Littlejohn (1998), such as between the passive and active audience or the micro and the macro audiences. This insight is key for the Task 5.1 as the constitutive ungraspability of audiences implies that we are not setting out to provide the “final word” on European audiences but we recognize in advance the complex and shifting realities that these audiences navigate; this recognition already implies an approach that attempts to provide a comprehensive account of European audiences while being aware of the incompleteness and fluidity of the term ‘European audiences’ itself.

Furthermore, Carpentier and Wimmer provide a distinction between the term ‘audience’ and its varying articulations in the tradition of media studies, that is the consumer, the public, and the community, among others. These distinct articulations are of key concern for the European context. In critical audience studies, the audience does not merely imply a group of people who are consumers but also who are supposed to exercise their own judgement and maintain informed opinions about public affairs. That is to say, the audiences are not merely defined in marketing terms, that is by their choices or purchasing power, but by their ability to shape (or not) a public sphere that is potentially participatory, civic and democratic. In the tradition of these studies though, the audience is not free floating; it can be steered in several ways by media policies, nudged by advertisers or manipulated towards particular directions and beliefs. Thus, as Carpentier and Wimmer discuss, in the European context, which concerns us here, the notion of the public has a certain genealogy, that is, it is “*closely connected to the public service media tradition*”, denoting not merely consumers but “*a collective of ‘citizens who must be reformed, educated, informed as well as entertained – in short ‘served’ – presumably to enable them to better perform their democratic rights and duties*” (Ang, 1991, p. 29, in Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 39). Another articulation of the audience can be the term ‘community’, such as, for instance, a political or national community that receives certain media symbols in a broadly speaking homogenous ways, at least compared to other communities, or is addressed by media channels in particular way because of its uniqueness. The notion of the audience as a community sits well with the cultural studies tradition, especially post-Stuart Hall, which looks at how media meanings depend on demographic, situational, cultural or political characteristics pertaining to different audiences. For instance, John Fiske and Janice Radway offered the concept of the ‘interpretative community’ to account for audiences that interpret media texts in relatively uniform ways (the notion of fandom can be relevant here). This heterogeneity of articulations around the concept of the media audience helped us while drafting this task to cut through monolithic understandings of the audience as a certain ‘thing’ that is already known and bound to pre-existing theoretical investments.

Finally, Carpentier and Wimmer move the notion to the present day of digital media, which is also useful for the scope at hand. With the advent of digital media, there have been scholars who even questioned the effectiveness of the very term ‘audience’: the latter was popularized in the era of mass broadcast media, thus necessarily implying a significant degree of passivity in receiving information. The term audience, Carpentier and Wimmer argue quoting Lievrouw and Livingstone, “*which was and to some extent still is satisfactory for mass media research, fits poorly within the domain of new media*” (2023, p. 39). Digital audiences, via the affordances of platforms and other spaces of online interaction, can express their thoughts, emotions and personas in public, potentially for everyone to see. The digital audiences can thus better be seen as ‘users’, a term that “*emphasizes their online audience activity, where people were seen to ‘use’ media technologies and content more actively.*” (2023, p. 40) In this regard, the digital online media construct new expressive spaces for audiences that define the potentials as well as the expectations for audiences to exercise civic duties while being themselves significant “*mechanisms for socialization and for identity construction*” (2023, p. 40).

In the above ways the Deliverable 2.1 offered insights for grasping a theoretical framework for audiences as well as their evolution in Europe, which was the main concern of Task 5.1.

4. How D2.1 was used for Task 5.2, “Assessing trust in media and democratic institutions in Europe”

By Panos Kompatsiaris

Drawing from statistical data gathered from EUMEPLAT datasets and other sources, the Task 5.2 looks at trust in media and democratic institutions in Europe. More specifically, the Task 5.2 explores the relation between the trust in the media and the trust in the European Union as well as the connection between media trust and the state of freedom of information. At the time of writing, we are researching theoretical debates around media and trust in order to frame this task; as such, the Deliverable 2.1 is useful for drawing our attention to the broader concepts of trust and mistrust, and the operationalization of these concepts in debates around democracy and participation in Europe.

As noted above, we rely on statistical data around trust in media in Europe coming from EUMEPLAT and other sources, covering both legacy and online media. One of the working hypotheses of this task is that trust in legacy media indicates trust in the EU (at least to some considerable extent). One of the interesting and potentially challenging discussions in relation to this assumption is the debate that Carpentier and Wimmer situate around, on the one hand, the importance of trust for democratic participation and, on the other, the necessity of a level of distrust against state authorities for maintaining a level of citizen’s agency and critical awareness. On the one hand, thus, Carpentier and Wimmer consider trust as a ‘condition of possibility for democracy’ together with other conditions like access, interaction, engagement and knowledge. Following Peter Dahlgren and Claudia Alvares, who argue that “*a minimal level of ‘horizontal’ trust, that is, between citizens, is necessary for the emergence of the social bonds of cooperation between those who collectively engage in politics; there is an irreducible social dimension to doing politics*”, Carpentier and Wimmer argue that democratic participation relies on a level of trust between citizens and state (or European) authorities (2013, p. 24, in Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 22). In this regard, the EU should be spearheading consolidating as “*trust in the democratic institutions is seen as important to the functioning of democracy itself*” (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 22). On

the other hand, however, blindly trusting state authorities can be problematic and undermining the function of democracy that depends on the citizen's own critical thinking and questioning. As they note, the discussion on the fundamental role of trust in building democratic institutions has "*a counter-pendant, as distrust is also seen as an important component in the relation between citizens and the democratic state*", as distrust "*allows for critical evaluations of the workings of the state and for democratic participation to play its role*" (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 22). This choreography of the mutually constitutive relationship between a level of trust and a level of mistrust is helpful for approaching the questions of this task (and later for the analysis of interviews and focus groups) as it complicates the more linear assumption discussed above, according to which higher levels of trust is something inherently beneficial for democracy. Following Carpentier's and Wimmer's insights, the question between trust and levels of democracy that concerns this task needs to be approached with caution, as a very trustful population can prove obedient to the mandates of the state (which can often resort to undemocratic measures). At the same time, these insights are helpful for the qualitative analysis of interviews and focus groups as we can draw attention to the micro-decisions and everyday factors that shape one's attitude to trusting or distrusting media and participating in democratic processes in general.

In a later part of D2.1, on citizen participation and non-participation as modalities elevating and undermining democratic politics respectively, Carpentier and Wimmer speak precisely about trust and the media; they argue that the lack of trust in media institutions (and mostly legacy media associated with individual states or the EU as a whole) can pose a threat to citizen's participation. In the context of Europe, different countries have varying levels of media trust and, in this regard, it is hard to have a more qualitative understanding of how much citizens trust the EU as a whole irrespectively of specific territories and local debates (this would need a comparative research with other parts of the world that can function as yardstick for more qualitatively-oriented research). As Carpentier and Wimmer argue by looking at the EBU report on trust and media, which is based on data from the Eurobarometer, there is a certain level of mistrust distrust permeating European audiences and publics but this level varies among different European countries. While the "*average of the 28 EU countries is 40%, which implies that a substantial part of the European population reports a limited trust in media*", countries "*such as Finland, Albania and the Netherlands have their 'low trust' category around 20%, while in the UK, Spain, North Macedonia and Greece, the 'low trust' category is over 50% in size*" (Carpentier and Wimmer, 2023, p. 75). This data shows that there is no necessary correlation between media trust and geography (e.g., South and North of Europe) as different European countries trust or not media irrespectively of region (and this also further complicates the theory of media systems that was partly used in EUMEPLAT). Furthermore, this complicates, again, the linear assumption between trust in media institutions (especially legacy institutions) and degrees of trust in the EU.

In this picture, we need to add the rise of fake news and digital platform scandals as an important factor driving media distrust that may enable cynical responses and numb citizen's participation. Carpentier and Wimmer highlight this point that it implies that apart from the quality of reporting and overall integrity of media organizations, they are larger systemic forces that undermine trust in media institutions among citizens.

To sum up, the main takeaways from D2.1 for 5.2 Task are the questioning of the indispensable correlation between trust in state authorities and democratic practices, the focus on the interplay between trust and distrust for advancing democratic politics and the necessity

to consider the above in questions around media use and consumption in the qualitative analysis of our interviews and focus groups.

Part 2: Operationalization proposals

In Part 2, we can find the operationalization proposals for each of the following tasks: Task 3.2, Task 4.2 (with also references to Task 4.3), Task 5.3, Task 6.2 and Task 6.3/6.4. Each of the operationalization proposals has two subsections, one on the analysis of the task in the original proposal, and one presenting the actual operationalization proposals.

5. Operationalization proposal for Task 3.2

By Jeffrey Wimmer and Nico Carpentier

5.1 Task 3.2 in the original proposal

Task 3.2, “Assessing legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks in EU countries”, is described in the original proposal as follows (p. 32):

“To examine the extent to which the legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks in EU Member States contribute to securing and strengthening a democratic media system, interviews will be conducted with representatives of European associations (e.g., ERGA, AIPCE) and of national media authorities and press councils in the ten countries represented by the project partners, but also with NGOs (e.g., EJF, RSF) at European and national level.” (p. 32)

This task is part of WP 3 which aims to analyse all “*legal provisions, regulatory standards and self-regulatory mechanisms, under which media operate, journalists work (= supply side) and people seek to meet their everyday life information and communication needs (= demand side)*” (p. 31). In doing so, Task 3.2 strongly builds on Task 3.1, which maps the country-specific legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks. The original proposal states that the assessment should be comparative, nevertheless the results are to be prepared on a national basis. The results of this task should be part of two deliverables:

1. D3.2 Legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks in ten European countries (combined with results of Task 3.1) and;
2. D3.3 Comparative assessment of legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks for media in Europe.

In the dissemination section of the overall project, it is mentioned that this “*the assessment of legal provisions, regulatory standards and accountability mechanisms in EU countries from different democratic perspectives*”, will especially contribute to the “*policy papers with recommendations regarding transparency, legal incentives, editorial incentives and structural incentives.*” (p. 24)

One of the project’s principles is that the three basic dimensions of analysis—legal and regulatory framework, media supply, and media use—are always related to each other (p. 17). The empirical results of this task will also feed, for instance, into the demand side analysis design (p. 13) and into Task 4.2 (see next Section 6). From an analytical point of view, the interrelatedness of three dimensions should also be emphasized in the operationalization proposal.

In contrast to the Task 3.1 description, where a comprehensive list of studies, data sources, and national reports are mentioned (p. 9), information about the analytical procedures of Task 3.2. is scarce (for instance, in relation to the number of interviews), with the particular formulation of Task 3.2 resembling the task formulation at the beginning of the document:

“To get a more complete and differentiated picture of the legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks in the EU Member States, in a second step, interviews will be conducted with representatives of national media authorities and press councils and European associations (e.g., ERGA, AIPCE).” (p. 10)

Nevertheless, the proposal addresses eight indicators articulated with representative democracy and eight with participatory democracy (p. 10).

The “representative perspective” lists the following indicators (p. 10):

- *“Protection of freedom of expression (and restrictions)*
- *Protection of right to information (and restrictions)*
- *Protection of sources (and restrictions)*
- *Legal provisions to support media plurality and democratic quality (e.g., public support schemes)*
- *Defamation laws (and relaxations for journalists)*
- *Protection against hate speech (and restrictions)*
- *Legal obligation to political and economic independence, particularly of public service and community media (including recognition of community broadcasting as a third pillar of the broadcast sector)*
- *Working conditions of journalists and freelancers (e.g., social security schemes, collective agreements, ...)”*

The “participatory perspective” lists the following indicators (p. 10):

- *“Transparency of regulation of resources (e.g., spectrum allocation, reservation of TV or radio frequencies for community and alternative media, guarantees for access to radio and TV networks via must-carry rules)*
- *Transparency of media ownership and financing in terms of market operations and sources of income, including advertising*
- *Transparency of organizational structures and journalistic work (transparency of appointment and dismissal procedures of editors-in-chief, ombudspersons, etc.)*
- *Accountability measures to ensure internal plurality and journalistic quality*
- *Accountability measures at system and sector level (press council, code of ethics, initiatives to counter disinformation, etc.)*
- *Measures and initiative to enhance media and information literacy*
- *Self-regulatory measures at organizational level to guarantee editorial autonomy (e.g., editorial statutes, social diversity measures, internal plurality, ...)*
- *Self-regulatory measures at organizational level to ensure diversity and inclusion in management and newsrooms”*

In the broader discussion of the project’s objectives (p. 2), we also find a reference to media viability as *“the ability of media outlets and media landscapes to produce high-quality*

journalism in a sustainable way (Deselaers et al., 2019),” which introduces another indicator (broadening the “*Working conditions of journalists and freelancers*” indicator listed on p. 10), as media viability is explicitly connected to legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks, as legal/regulatory support for media viability “*unfolds (media pluralism’s) democratic potential to the full*” (p. 2). While the second argument in this page-2-list is well covered in the above-mentioned indicators, also the third element listed there, with its reference to media access and participation, can be considered an additional indicator. This is its formulation:

“the media reach out into all segments of society, thus including as many people as possible not only in public discourse but also in processes of political participation and civic engagement.” (p. 2)

When evaluating these indicators (as they are rendered in Table 1.1 of the original proposal, p. 10), there is an emphasis towards supply-side components, with elements almost exclusively focused on the functioning of media. Also the “participatory perspective” has a fairly strongly focus on more traditional—and arguably minimalist participatory—components of media functioning, such as transparency, autonomy and (staff) diversity. Even accountability is very much driven by media organizational logics. Moreover, through accountability’s particular temporal structure—accountability is mainly an “ex post”, and not an “ex ante”, mechanism—it also has to be considered more minimalist-participatory. Without disregarding the importance of these indicators, only one indicator—namely, literacy—has a more public- or audience-centric focus. This implies that indicators which are more maximalist participatory (and, for instance, belong more to the realm of community media practices), such as the involvement (and empowerment) of non-professionals in the media’s production environment, and the focus on community needs (which are to be served), have not been included. Similarly, also indicators referring to the quality of societal debates (and their mediations/representations), and indicators related to the diversity of publics, audiences and communities, and their needs, have not been listed explicitly.

Another—less important—gap is that the connection of the legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks relate to “*the ethical standards under which traditional and new media organizations and journalism operate*” (p. 2) is explicitly mentioned at the beginning (of the original proposal), but not sufficiently developed in the later descriptions of WP3 and Task 3.2. Even though the risk of losing WP3’s focus on the legal/regulatory realm needs to be avoided, a reflection on how these legal and (self-)regulatory frameworks relate to (media) ethics might still be necessary.

5.2 The operationalization proposal for Task 3.2

In order not to replicate the results of Task 3.1 but to supplement them productively, it is suggested to take a different approach in Task 3.2, in terms of the empirical-methodological process (selection of interviewees, guideline and interpretation). Nevertheless, the results of Task 3.1 serve as a good starting point because they also designate the key actors in assuring the legal framework in each country. Moreover, the actor categories (to be interviewed) are mentioned in the original proposal. We have:

- representatives of national media authorities and press councils and (their) European associations (e.g., ERGA, AIPCE)
- NGOs (e.g., EJF, RSF) at European and national level.

Even though there are a few practical questions left (1) about the target numbers, (2) about the division of labour (between the national and European level), and whether other actor categories (e.g., journalist unions, media watchdogs and legal experts) need to be included, these operational issues are fairly easy to handle, and we suggest for each MeDeMAP partner to interview one representative of the following (national) actor categories each: (1) the national⁵ media authority; (2) the national press council, (3) the national journalist's union, (4) a media watch dog organization, (5) one community media association, (6) one expert in media law and (7) one expert in underrepresented groups in society. If they exist at the national level, also a national organization representing the audience⁶ can be included in the list of actors to be interviewed. This brings us to seven to eight national interviewees, who would be interviewed by each MeDeMAP partner. Here, we propose to leave the selection to the national partners, although during the interviews, suggestions for more interviewees could be asked from the interviewees. This cluster of national interviews, handled by each partner, could possibly be combined with one actor active at the European level. This model would result in each MeDeMAP partner being responsible for one 'European interview', a selection process which needs to be coordinated by the WP leader so that the categories mentioned above are well-covered. Alternatively, these European-level interviews could be handled by the WP3 leader themselves.

These interviews are to be considered expert interviews, generated through theoretical sampling. In contrary to traditional sampling methods (which mostly use representative sampling), theoretical sampling emphasizes theoretical sensitivity and actively seeks new data to challenge assumptions. The strategy of (maximum) variation—i.e., the selection of as many different organizations as possible—is specifically intended to ensure the diversity and depth of the sample. This also implies that the selection should not be based one quantitative criterion, such as their public resonance, financing etc., but also on their uniqueness.

The main question—in relation to operationalization of Task 3.2—is related to the thematic focus of the interviews, though. Here, we have to keep in mind that the personal background of the experts (attitude, career, political orientation, etc.) should be queried, but that it is not the main focus of the interviews. Still, it should be reconsidered by evaluating the statements of the expert interviewees. Secondly, the original proposal also implies a thematic structure, through the listing of a series of indicators, which can easily be transformed in interview questions (or topics), even though clustering some indicators might be necessary. Here, questions could ask about how an indicator is translated into national/regional law and (self-)regulations, combined with a normative evaluation of the strengths and weakness of that translation, and possible improvements. Here, it is crucial to ensure that the differences for public/market/community media, and between legacy/digital media are addressed.

In constructing the interview guide, the theoretical framework developed in D2.1 can provide support for the interview guide, at a number of levels:

1. The main structure of D2.1 can be (at least partially) used to inspire the interview guide (and contribute to its structure), with the section about the conditions of possibility, the struggles and the threats offering opportunities to deepen the focus,

⁵ And/or regional, if there is no or not only a national entity.

⁶ Originally represented by the European Association for Viewers Interests (EAVI) at the European level, these types of organisations have become quite rare. The best example is the British Voice of the Listener & Viewer (VLV – see <https://www.vlv.org.uk/>).

also asking about less obvious legal/regulatory possibilities and the absences of particular mechanisms.

- D2.1's Section 7 ("struggles over media's democratic role") is particularly relevant because it identifies the main challenges of current media-democracy relationships in the European context (pp. 55ff.): (1) the organization of media pluralism, (2) degrees of media freedom/freedom of expression, (3) degrees and forms of media representation as well as (4) of media participation. We will return to the latter two below. Importantly, this focus on struggles allows highlighting that legislation and (self-)regulation is also contested, and an object of struggle in itself, which might also be important to discuss in the interviews.
 - D2.1 also develops one particular condition of possibility (Section 8.3), which plays an important role in the context of D2.1: the acceptance of regulatory efforts (or their legitimacy). This would also allow highlighting possible resistances against legal/regulatory practices or attempts. But, the concept of the "condition of possibility" might also be helpful in structuring the topic list, and creating clusters of questions. Finally, the condition of possibility focussing on Democratic Media Culture (Section 8.2) might also inspire questions about the limits of legal/regulatory efforts, in generating desired behaviour, in over-emphasizing coercion and punishment, in privileging law and regulation over ethics, in choosing between law and self-regulation, or in simply the impossibility of creating generalizable rules. Here, a simple question about what should be regulated from a democratic perspective, but cannot, might yield interesting answers.
 - Also Section 9 on Threats to democratic media roles might prove to be helpful, as these elements allow raising issues about economic sustainability (viability), which also links up with the discussion on infrastructural and organizational stability as condition of possibility. In addition, the discussions on (symbolic) violence, market dominance, disenchantment and (lack of trust), information quality, all raise legal/regulatory questions, only partially covered by the indicators in the original proposal. These questions are not only about how certain practices are currently regulated, but also whether some practices should be regulated (or not), and if so, how. Here, the argument is that Task 3.2 might not take the current legal/regulatory situation for granted, but should also problematize absence, and discuss (future) protective needs.
2. The main gap we identified in the lists of indicators in Table 1.1 on page 10—discussed in the previous Section 5.1—is related to the weak presence of participatory indicators that are public- or audience-centred. Again, it is important to repeat the sentence on p. 2 of the original proposal, which refers to media access and media participation. Here, for a healthy democracy, it is considered important that "*the media reach out into all segments of society, thus including as many people as possible not only in public discourse but also in processes of political participation and civic engagement.*" (p. 2)

This brings us to the realm of community media practices, but also to discussions about communication rights (see, e.g., Carpentier, 2011), moving away from the right to be informed, to the right to communicate. Here, the argument is again double: (1) not to forget legal/regulatory frameworks related to community media practices, and (2) not to limit questions about the legal/regulatory stimulation of participation in and through the media to legal/regulatory frameworks about community media.

In D2.1, this is particularly highlighted in Section 6, about the roles of media in democracy. This section not only discusses participation, but also argues for the importance of the conditions of possibility for participation, for instance, access and interaction, which also connects to the political interactions in the public sphere, and the facilitation of societal debate and democratic struggle (Section 6.3).

On the basis of these reflections, the following items for the interview topic list are proposed:

1/Conditions of possibility

- * media viability/sustainability
- * legitimacy of democratic state regulation
- * democratic culture (and the limits of legal/frameworks)

2/On-going regulatory/legal struggles and areas of contestation

3/Protection of freedoms

- * freedom of expression protection
- * watchdog role protection (e.g., source protection)
- * professional autonomy / protection for external pressure

4/Protection of organizational media diversity

- * legal provisions to support media plurality
- * diversity and inclusion in management and newsrooms

5/Protection of democratic quality

- * right to information
- * protection against defamation (and right to fair representation)
- * prevention of hate speech
- * transparency and accountability

6/Stimulation of participation (including conditions of possibility of participation)

- * media access
- * media and information literacy
- * right to debate / to interaction in the public sphere
- * right to communicate (e.g., non-professional production)
- * right to have one's community served

6. Operationalization proposal for Task 4.2

By Jeffrey Wimmer and Nico Carpentier

6.1 Task 4.2 in the original proposal

Task 4.2 is part of the supply-side component of MeDeMAP's WP4, whose main objectives are described as follows:

“The work-package is organized in two strands: a wide-scale quantitative inquiry, based on secondary data and realized at the European level; and an in-depth analysis of media production that will be carried out in the ten countries represented in the Consortium.” (p. 32)

Task 4.2 is part of the second strand, and is described in the original proposal in the following terms:

“To get a more complete and theory-driven picture of the relationship between production conditions and democratic functions of the media, a twofold assessment will be carried out. The first part concerns media production in the ten countries represented by the project partners (Task 4.3), and the second part deals with political participation through and in the media (Task 4.4). In the first part, interviews will be conducted with representatives of relevant public bodies, particularly national regulatory agencies, industry representatives, (e.g., from PSM, commercial broadcasting, press, digital native news media, social media channels) and those media organizations that are often underrepresented in international reports and studies. The research results are also fed into the media map.” (p. 33, see also similar p. 12)

Task 4.2 builds on Task 4.1, which consists of the mapping of media outlets and market structures. Both tasks are expected to feed into Deliverable 4.3 (“Media production in 10 EU countries – Country reports”) but also to lay the foundation for Task 4.3, labelled “Assessing political participation through and in the media”. All are meant to contribute to Task 4.4, which is called the “Final analysis: Media and democracy”. This combination is also mentioned in the project's summary, which refers to an “assessment of democratic functions of traditional & digital media (PSM, commercial and non-profit) by relating media production (management and journalism) to political participation through and in the media.” (p. 24) Similarly, when the proposal describes the outcomes of WP4, these two focal points –media types and forms of participation—are also used, when it is written that these outputs can “be arranged along two axes, one relating to different media types and the other to different forms of participation, the enabling of which can be understood as an essential democratic function of the media.” (p. 11)

Particularly important here is that the second strand of WP4 will thus have two components, namely the (1) assessment of media production (Task 3.2), and the (2) assessment of political participation (in and through the media) (Task 3.3). There are a number of problems here: These two tasks are—at least potentially—overlapping, and their exact relationship is not developed in a very detailed way, in the original proposal. In particular, the potentially general nature of Task 4.1 and 4.2 (focusing on media production), and the focus on participation in Task 4.3, threaten to leave a series of gaps in the analysis of the media-

democracy relationship, in particular when it comes to the informational, watchdog and representational roles. Moreover, the risk also exists that Task 4.2 will remain too general, offering a description of media systems, and not connecting to the main theme of the project, namely media and democracy.

In order to gain more insight into the specificity of Task 4.2 (also in relation to Task 4.3), the general description of WP4 and the supply-side analysis, provides more information. First, the original proposal mentions a clear emphasis on news media (p. 10)—which has been confirmed and specified in the work of the MeDeMAP Media Definition Taskforce. Second, the proposal also contains a detailed description of Task 4.2, slightly hidden, as it is called here a “second step” of WP4. This second step is described as follows:

“To get a more complete picture of the production conditions and business models, in a second step, interviews will be conducted with representatives of relevant public bodies, particularly national regulatory agencies, industry representatives (e.g., from PSM, commercial broadcasting, press, digital native news media, social media channels) and those media organizations that are often underrepresented in international reports and studies.” (p. 12)

As the relationship of Task 4.2 with Task 4.3 is important for further developing Task 4.2, we also need to mention Task 4.3 here. This Task 4.3, focusing on participation, is described in this part of the proposal, with much more detail, as step 3 and 4:

“With regard to the analysis of the forms of political participation,
(3) again, in a first step, existing European (e.g., Media Pluralism Monitor, Media for Democracy Monitor) and national data sources and reports will be reviewed to obtain information on
➤ (kind of) access to media for women, local/regional communities, minorities, refugees and population groups that otherwise have no or limited voice in the public sphere because of social, cultural or linguistic reasons.
(4) Again, the next step serves to gain a more comprehensive picture of the forms of political participation that are enabled and supported by media. Therefore, a survey (CAWI) among representatives (e.g., managers, journalists, social media channel managers, influencers) of all kinds of media organizations (including public service, commercial and nonprofit organizations) will be carried out in the partner countries to explore organizational and editorial policies and journalists’ perception of their work (footnote removed) in order to identify
➤ the different mechanisms that media have developed and the practices journalists are familiar with to facilitate political participation
➤ and the notions of participation that lie behind these mechanisms and practices.” (p. 12)

Here, it is important to stress that Task 4.3 combines a literature review which is focused on the access of underrepresented groups only (step 3), with a survey⁷ of media organization’s

⁷ The reference to CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interviewing) leaves no doubt that this concerns a quantitative survey. The Task 4.3 description on p. 33 mentions that the task will “*mainly (be) based on a survey*”, but the use of “mainly” is understood to leave space for the literature review of step 3.

representatives to query about the participatory practices organized by their media organizations (step 4). No interviews are planned for Task 4.3.

Theoretical support for Task 4.3 in the original proposal comes from Table 1.2 (p. 11), which combines a representative-democratic focus and a participatory-democratic focus on media (and democracy). The former focusses on participation *through* media (which is limited to participation's conditions of possibility: access and interaction), while the latter combines an emphasis on participation *in* media production with one on structural participation *in* media organizations (which are both mapped on a minimalist-maximalist dimension). The representative-democratic focus—with its reference to “Reactive access” and “(Quasi-) Mediated interaction”, which we can interpret as a reference to participation's conditions of possibility—opens (some) space for a broader approach to the media-democracy relationship, and the different roles media can take (beyond the more ‘purist’ and restrictive interpretations of participation).

In the concluding part of the supply-side description of the original proposal, two elements are added, namely that the further development of the analytical instruments “*will be developed in accordance with the theoretical framework of the project*” (p. 12) and that the results of the supply-side analysis will also be included “*as country-level variables in the demand side analyses.*” (p. 12)

6.2 The operationalization proposal for Task 4.2

This invitation to feed Task 4.2 from the theoretical framework developed in D2.1 is what motivates the reflections in this Section, but we will also add a number of more methodological suggestions, as they intersect with our theoretical suggestions. Moreover, as the relationship between Task 4.2 and Task 4.3 is important for elaborating Task 4.2, some comments on Task 4.3 will be included here as well.

The results of Task 4.1 serve as a good starting point because they illustrate well the country-specific diversity of the European media landscapes, at the level of media regulation authorities of media producers. Building on these basic overviews, each national MeDeMAP partner team can select the expert interviewees, again using theoretical sampling (see also the operationalization plan for 3.2, in Section 5.2). The actor types are listed in the task description, with seven target groups included:

1. “*national regulatory agencies*” and “*industry representatives from (...)*”
2. *PSM*
3. *commercial broadcasting*
4. *press*
5. *digital native news media*
6. *social media channels (...)*
7. *media organizations that are often underrepresented in international reports and studies.*” (p. 33)

First, we suggest two modifications of this list. A first modification considers that the representatives of the “*national regulatory agencies*” will already be interviewed for Task 3.2 (see Section 5). As this might (especially in smaller countries) concern the same persons (and their added value might be limited), we would suggest to focus on this target group in Task

3.2 (and not here). This reduces the list to six actor groups. Moreover, especially the group of “underrepresented media organizations” is highly diverse and differs from country to country. This is complicated by the only partial overlap between minority media and community media, as the former can also be commercial media. We would recommend to translate “*media organizations that are often underrepresented in international reports and studies*” (p. 33) as community media, given their important role for democracy from theoretical perspective (see D2.1) as well from the perspective of EU politics (Council of Europe, 2009).

Secondly, we should also acknowledge that news can be generated within these media organizations by different sub-entities, and they can vastly differ. One famous example—working in the related field of documentary production—is the BBC’s Community Programme Unit (CPU), which, in contrast to most other units and departments of the BBC, cherished a radical maximalist-participatory practice (Carpentier, 2003). We argue that this complexity is to be translated into the interviewee selection criteria, with—for each of the six target groups—one interviewee selected from more general management levels and one interviewee selected from a unit/entity which has been active in producing more innovative interventions related to the media-democracy relationship. This would bring the number of interviewees to twelve.

Thirdly, there is also the matter of the relationship between the three first tasks of WP4, and the possible gaps that this creates. The one hint to the objective of the Task 4.3 interviews that we can find in the proposal (“*To get a more complete picture of the production conditions and business models*”, p. 12) is rather vague and adds little value to the main project’s focus on the media-democracy relationship. Moreover—and importantly—merely following this description would leave considerable gaps in the supply-side analysis of the media-democracy relationship, as we would only have the analysis of the media systems in Task 4.1 and 4.2, and then the strong focus on participation in Task 4.3 (only to be researched with a survey). This is why we recommend to focus Task 4.2 more explicitly on the media-democracy relationship, but also to operationalize Task 4.3 in a broader manner (also taking participation’s conditions of possibility into account).

	Original proposal	Proposed revision
Task 4.1	Mapping (1) media outlets, (2) market structures and (3) options for political participation (p. 32)	No revision proposed, as this task is already almost completed (even though component three has (so far) remained underdeveloped)
Task 4.2	Further analysing the media production context (“ <i>production conditions and business models</i> ”, p. 12)	Broaden the focus of the interviews, to include questions about the media-democracy relationship deployed in particular media organizations (filling the gap on participation in the Task 4.1 reports and feeding better into the survey of Task 4.3)
Task 4.3	Analysing political participation in and through media	Broaden the focus of the survey, to include questions about the conditions of possibility of participation (capturing all dimensions of Table 1.2)

For Task 4.2, this implies focussing the interviews—which are, similar to Task 3.2, expert interviews—more on the main theme of the entire project, namely the media-democracy relationship, focussing on what different media organizations currently do. As it is important to formulate a clear research question for the interviews, we propose this question to be: How do media organizations currently exercise their democratic roles? Secondary research questions could be: What are the differences between different types of media in relation to the exercise of their democratic roles? and How do the current economic, political and social contexts influence the exercise of these roles?

Here, we believe that the Task 4.2 interview guide could build on the framework developed in D2.1, and in particular the following components:

1/ Section 6 on the roles of (European) media in democracy, which tries to acknowledge “the diversity of discursive-normative constructions (and material realizations)” (p. 55).

- Informing citizens
- Controlling power holders
- Facilitating societal debate and democratic struggle
- Representing the pluriformity of the social and the political
- Facilitating public participation

2/ Section 7 on the struggles over media’s democratic roles, with

- Media Pluralism
- Media Freedom and Freedom of Expression
- Media Representation, and especially the fair representations of societal (underrepresented) subgroups, but also the representation of political actors and democracy as a whole
- Media Participation, and especially the choices between minimalist/maximalist forms of participation

3/ Section 8 on the conditions of possibility of media to play a democratic role (linking up with Section on threats)

- Economic context (scarcity of resources and sustainability, marketization, which allows to bring in the media production contexts in the original proposal (p. 12))
- Political context (impact of authoritarianism and populism, ...)
- Social context (impact of polarization, disenchantment, distrust, ...)
- Technological context (impact of technological change, AI, platformization, ...)

Given the abstract complexity and implicit normativity of all these elements, the interview guide should have the composition of a guided and narrative interview, in order to also gain information in the collective-historical context of each media organization and about meaningful examples. Therefore respondents should be selected – if possible – according to internal knowledge, narrative competence and willingness. Additionally, if the pre-test would indicate problematic answering, a qualitative stimulus – a prototypical example of each role – could boost the range of answers. The interviewees could be asked afterwards to provide documentation in relation to particular answers.

When interviewing experts from media organizations, social desirability could be a particular disruptive factor, as these experts might still defend particular (ideological) positions, for instance, in relation to the role of the market and capitalism. To avoid this, following techniques should be applied: (1) Pre-setting motives, attitudes or evaluations in order to relieve the pressure of the climate of opinion, (2) asking indirectly, e.g. questions aimed not only at evaluating a media organization specifically, but also at assessing the current national/European situation or the situation of other media, (3) introducing counter-arguments into the question (projective technique).

As a final footnote, we would also like to suggest that Deliverable D4.1, the “Media mapping blog” is activated as soon as possible. As the initial proposal argues, this blog “*will offer short posts and texts concerning current problems and developments with regard to media and democracy issues in the EU.*” (p. 33) We can argue that producing this blog requires a project-wide effort, but as the blog is a deliverable allocated to WP4, we still believe that the initiative should come from WP4. From a WP2 perspective, this is important, as some of the debates captured in this section might also find their translation in postings on this blog.

7. Operationalization proposal for Task 5.3

By Nico Carpentier

7.1 Task 5.3 in the original proposal

This is the description of Task 5.3 in the work packages, as in the original proposal (p. 34):

“In the ten countries represented by the project partners, an in-depth ethnographic inquiry will be realized, on a group of at least 40 subjects. Qualitative methods will be used, which include conversational interviews, focus groups, and document analysis. The level of participation, the trust in media and institutions, and social agency and political participation will be considered as main research themes. The aim is therefore that of understanding needs and motivations of the people – what they expect from media and democracy – and it is our belief that qualitative social research is the best methodological approach for this goal.”

In the central explanation of the demand side project in the original proposal, the following two dimensions are highlighted: “*the media repertoires people choose to meet their information needs, and the reasons and motives for this selection and, in particular, the democratic attitudes and expectations associated with it.*” (p. 12) WP5 is then said to aim to provide insights into:

*“> how democratic notions and expectations towards democratic functions of the media are distributed among a country’s population and the extent to which they strengthen trust in the media,
> how trust in the media is related to trust in democracy and democratic institutions,
> how the media repertoires of the various audience groups maintaining certain democratic notions are composed,*

➤ *and how the members of the groups can be described in terms of socio-demographic characteristics.” (p. 13)*

The proposal contains a table (table 1.3), with four main “variables”, namely “Political attitudes”, “Political participation”, “Media attitudes” and “Media use”. (p. 13) When operationalizing the table, the following text has been included in the proposal.

“On the other hand, ethnographic studies will be conducted in each of the ten partner countries to reconstruct subjective everyday experiences in dealing with media and political participation and to get a deeper understanding of the connections between media use and the forms of participation practised. By paying attention to the diversity of individuals’ media repertoires or media diets, the construction of these repertoires can be used as enablers to discuss and explore their communicative needs, expectations and the ways they integrate the different media in their activities as citizens (if at all). In this way, we can find out whether and how the use of certain types of media – be it traditional or social media – is related to certain forms of participation in certain socio-demographic groups. Special attention will be paid to gender-related differences and to the media use of disadvantaged groups.” (p. 14)

In other parts of the original proposal we find more references to the demand side, including the (study of the):

- *“actual demand for political information and the expectations and motivations behind it” (p. 3);*
- *“the demand side which encompasses the diversity of sources, the amount and quality of information that people are interested in accessing and making use of it; the values, attitudes and communicative needs and habits behind it, as well as the skills required to comprehend and retain this information”, (p. 5) and*
- *“their everyday life information and communication needs” (p. 9)*

If we compare the different elements of the demand side WP, as we can find them in different parts of the original proposal, we can find considerable variations in objectives and focal points. In particular, there is a strong tension between the media component and the democracy component, which produces the risk that the media (repertoires) component becomes isolated from the democracy component, and that WP5 will become a media repertoires study, disconnecting itself from the main focus of the projects (which is to study the intersection of media and democracy).

Secondly, also the methodological dimension is not always very clear, especially not in what will be studied in a quantitative way, and what will be studied in a qualitative way. For instance, the above-mentioned Table 1.3 contains a very quantitative language, while it is supposed to provide support for the entire WP, including its qualitative components.

7.2 The operationalization proposal for Task 5.3

This operationalization proposal is grounded in a dialogue with a note produced by WP5 coordinator IULM, entitled “Methodological Protocol” (dd. 23 December 2023), and authored by Andrea Miconi, Giulia Ferri, Elisabetta Risi, Nello Barile, and Panos

Kompatsiaris. The note structures the qualitative component of the audience study, as captured in Task 5.3.

A critical evaluation of this note shows that the same tensions that are part of the original proposal, have also impacted on the methodological protocol. Moreover, from the position of WP2, we also want to argue for a closer connection between the Task 5.3 design and the theoretical framework generated in WP2, and we want to argue to take the general focus of the entire project—the study of the intersection of media and democracy—also as the starting point of Task 5.3, in order to mediate the problems with the original proposal.

Importantly, the methodological protocol also reduces the broader questions on media and democracy to two research questions, which are only related to trust and media repertoires. This is consistent with the two dimensions outlined on p. 12 of the original proposal. These are the research questions in the methodological protocol:

- (RQ 1) *“How trust in the media is related to democracy and democratic institutions”*;
- (RQ 2) *“How the media repertoires of various audience groups maintaining certain democratic notions are composed”*; (methodological protocol, p. 4)

The main risk is that these RQs in the (proposed) protocol bring in a very broad and strong focus on media repertoires, and might cause a significant part of the time in the interviews and focus groups being spent on discussing the diversity and complexity of media repertoires, which is a relevant topic, but not at the centre of the object of study of a media and democracy project. Also the exclusive focus on, and privileging of, trust will need to be reconsidered, as this generates too many tensions with the main thrust of the project (and other parts of the WP5 descriptions).

A second problem is the exclusive focus on *“the thematic areas of the project”*, which are *“media consumption, attitudes towards the media, political attitudes and political participation”* (methodological protocol, p. 19). If we look at the different items of the proposed interview questionnaires and the focus group topic lists, we can also find a series of variations (at least in the headers of topics):

Interviews	Focus Groups
Media Use and Political Participation	Media Use
Media attitudes	Media Trust
Political trust	Opinion and attitudes about democracy
Democratic Role of the Media	Political Participation

These four thematic areas find themselves in a tension with the two research questions, where media repertoires shift to media consumption/use (increasing the risk of moving away from the study of media *and* democracy), trust has an unclear status, and (media and/or democracy-related) attitudes and the “democratic role of the media” appear. The introduction of the attitudes concept, often used in quantitative/behavioural studies, needs to be considered and motivated. Variations between interviews and focus groups need to be logical, and embedded in the RQs and a research strategy. Moreover—and most importantly—there is hardly any attention for the connection between the media and the democracy part.

A third problem is that the current approach risks placing a too strong emphasis on behavioural aspects for the qualitative study, at the expense of experiential/conceptual

components. Here, there might be a quali/quantitative methodological mismatch. Quantitative research is not very suitable to establish (factual) behaviours—there, quantitative research is more appropriate. Qualitative research (e.g., the planned focus groups and interviews) is much more appropriate for research into people’s ideas and experiences, and how they give meaning to them. In particular, focus groups allow participants to confront their ideas and experiences with other participants’ ideas and experiences, thus allowing them to develop these more through a collective/dialogical process.

I thus propose the following:

- to develop the design from a broad perspective, focussing on media *and* democracy (namely, its intersection), and modestly integrate the four themes (and other relevant concepts, e.g. social agency, which is in the WP task description in the original proposal) into this topic list. Here, I believe that the original proposal needs to be read critically, deciding what to keep on the basis of the main project focus;
- to fall back on the main structure of the Deliverable 2.1, which has two main components, (1) democracy and (2) media in democracy. As this is a more natural order, we propose to start with items on democracy;
- to focus media repertoires only on media use that has democratic relevance (moving away from a media repertoires/consumption/use study only);
- to consider whether the RQs for the interviews and the focus groups need to be different, and (if so) to embed them in a clear research strategy, for instance, covering different objectives of the WP (possibly by having more attention for media repertoires in the interviews);
- to start from developing the topic list of the focus groups, and then decide on the interview questionnaire;
- to ensure that the topic list and interview questionnaire have a natural conversational flow (which is a bit at odds with having four disconnected themes) and that a topic list should be short (keeping in mind that as each question / item can trigger 5 to 10 minutes of discussion, when moderated well, while now entire themes have been allocated only 20 minutes of focus group time).

For the focus group topic list, I propose the following five components:

1/Warm-up: Introduction and two short questions:

- How do you feel about media?
- How do you feel about democracy?

(this will require moderation, to prevent entire focus groups to be ‘filled’ with a discussion on these two questions only)

2/Segment on the nature of democracy

Possible questions:

- What is democracy for you?
- How is democracy in your country doing? Where is it working, and where not?
- What are the threats to democracy?
- How are you empowered in your democracy? And how is this limited?

3/Segment on the thematic focal points on democracy

Possible questions:

- How much do you participate in your democracy? In politics? In other parts of society?
- How much trust do you have in your democracy? In politics? In other parts of society?

4/Segment on the media's role in democracy

Possible questions:

- How do you think how media can contribute to a viable/functioning democracy?
- Do media always play these roles well? What is then hampering them from supporting democracy? Which media work better, are there any differences?

5/Segment on the thematic focal points on media's role in democracy

Possible questions:

- Do you agree with what media show you? Where/when not? And why?
- Do you trust what media publish? Where/when not? And why?
- How can you participate in democracy through media? Which media work better?

In my opinion, the interview questionnaire could then be an extended version of these thematic choices, although, given the tensions in the original proposal, an alternative model would be to disconnect the in-depth interviews from the focus groups, and have them answer different RQs, but then this division needs to be logical and framed by a research strategy.

In addition, there are also a series of methodological issues I want to raise, also on the basis of our work in WP2:

- The integration of disadvantaged groups in the interviews (and not in the focus groups), with a quorum of 20%, is welcomed.
- Currently, the methodological protocol is indecisive about which 'hard' criterion to use to generate homogeneity in the focus groups, and a decision needs to be taken. From a WP2 perspective, I advocate for the use of (1) political activity and the (2) rural/urban dimension as criteria, as the first generates political differences, and the second cultural differences. During the many discussions on this item (and in the methodological protocol) we have also seen (3) age and (4) educational level proposed for this purpose. Given the different perspectives, I agree with using (1) political activity (or interest, as the WP5 coordination team prefers) and (3) age as criteria to establish homogeneity, as long as the (2) rural/urban dimension, the (4) educational level and (5) gender are used as diversity criteria, ensuring that there is enough diversity for these three criteria in the **total** number of focus groups organized by each partner.
- For the diversity criteria, I would also, for pragmatic reasons, plead for not having strong quantitative cut-off points for the (2) rural/urban dimension, the (4) educational level and (5) gender criteria, as social reality is much more complex than used in

quantitative surveys, and we should not import these principles in the focus group design.

8. Operationalization proposal for Task 6.2

By Nico Carpentier

Task 6.2 is part of work package six (WP6) on citizen parliaments, which analyses how demand meets supply. The WP is described in the following terms, in the original proposal:

“The objective of WP6 is to realise dialogical interactions of citizens and media stakeholders meeting in citizen parliaments to contribute for the development of the future media map. (...) The final concept and moderation of the process will be based on best practise research on successful practise of policy development with citizen parliaments in Europe.” (p. 35)

Even though the role of WP2 in WP6 is not entirely clear, I believe that it is vital to also ground WP6 in the theoretical framework created in WP2. The mild lack of clarity originates from differences between the WP2 and WP6 descriptions, where in the WP6 description, the proposal suggests to only ground the development of WP6 in WPs 3, 4 and 5 (and thus not WP2). But in the description of WP2, we have one task, namely Task 2.4, which is explicitly focussed on the “Theory-driven re-analysis of the project’s interventions”, and which has the following description:

“The theory work package should continue to provide support during the entire action, through the organisation of internal workshops and reflection moments. This part of the work of WP2 will be intensified when WP6 becomes activated, as the use of Participatory Action Research requires intense moments of reflection. D2.4 will thus consist out of two parts, reporting on the (1) internal workshops and reflection moments, and on (2) the reflection components of the of (sic) Participatory Action Research cycle.” (p. 31).

Also WP2’s general description refers to this role:

“In doing so, WP2 provides the theoretical foundation for research in all other work packages. This applies particularly to WP6, which is using a Participatory Action Research approach, requiring permanent interaction between reflection (and theory-building) and action.” (p. 30)

To further complicate the situation, the list of deliverables of WP6 also includes D6.4, the report on the “Future roadmap for European media and democracy”, which has, in its description, a clear reference to WP2’s “theory-driven evaluation” (deadline month 32), which overlaps with D2.4 (deadline month 36). Despite these coordination problems (see below, Section 9), also this statement in the original proposal legitimates the activation of WP2 in providing support for the different tasks of WP6. This is the description of D6.4:

“The results of the citizens’ parliaments and their theory-driven evaluation will be made publicly available and distributed to relevant stakeholders. Results will also be included in the map of European political information environments.” (p. 36)

Arguably, the role of WP2 applies less to Task 6.1, as this task is focussed on the development of a methodological report on the “successful practise of policy development with citizen parliaments in Europe.” This task is less relevant for the discussion here, although this Task 6.1 report will feed into the design of the citizen parliaments (which is part of Task 6.2, entitled the “Implementation of citizens’ parliaments in local contexts of the countries covered”). More specifically, Task 6.2 starts on month 23, and Deliverable 6.2 on the “Design of citizens’ parliaments” has to be ready on month 24, which implies that Task 6.1 will already have to prepare part of the design for D6.2.

8.1 Task 6.2 in the original proposal

Task 6.2 is entitled “Implementation of citizens’ parliaments in local contexts of the countries covered”, which includes the design of these citizens parliaments and the transformation of these interventions into data (to be analysed in Task 6.3). This implies that Task 6.2 also includes data gathering processes (which will be discussed in our operationalization proposal for Task 6.3/6.4, in Section 9.2).

Several of the characteristics of the citizens’ parliaments that will be organized, are outlined—quite clearly—in the original proposal, and need little discussion here:

- *“Citizens’ parliaments (and also e-parliaments which use modern communication technologies to include a wide range of citizens; see, for example, Papaloi & Gouscos, 2009) involve ‘a large group of randomly selected citizens [...] coming together to listen, learn, reflect upon and discuss an issue of public importance. Through this transparent process of deliberation, they produce recommendations for those in leadership that reflect the considered views of the broader community.’ Often, experts (e.g., journalists, politicians, scholars) are invited to have their voices feed into these deliberations. These citizens’ parliaments may ‘change the way people talk about politics and make political decisions’, thus fostering trust in democratic processes (Blackadder, 2009, p. 3). In this project, the **outcome** of these citizens’ parliaments, organized locally in partner countries, will be a **future roadmap for European media and democracy.**” (p. 14)*
- *“At the methodological level, **gender-related aspects** will be taken into account in both in the construction of the groups in ethnographic research and the composition of citizens’ parliaments.” (p. 15)*
- *“‘citizen parliaments’ will be guided by the idea of a kind of ‘audience council’ **representing the interest of readers, listeners, viewers and online media users.**” (p. 16)*
- *“citizens’ parliaments will be organized, first **at a local level** and then, at the end of the project, **at the European level**, in order to develop a future roadmap for European media and democracy” (p. 20)*
- *“The **sociodemographic composition** of the citizens’ parliaments should be guided by the idea of a kind of “audience council” representing the interest of readers, listeners, viewers and online media users across across (sic) various sociodemographic groups. **Several sessions are planned for each citizens’ parliament.** There will be a specific **focus on different forms and concepts of participation** that take into account different groups of citizens.” (p. 35)*
- The citizen parliaments will have *“**minutes and resolutions**” (p. 35)*

- *“The process of implementing citizens’ parliaments will be accompanied by **blog posts and online debates on the EPALE platform** to enable further participation from the educational sector.” (p. 36)*
- *“The **results of the citizens’ parliaments** and their theory-driven evaluation will be **made publicly available and distributed to relevant stakeholders**. Results will also be included in the map of European political information environments.” (p. 36)*
- *“As in a ‘normal’ parliament, there will be several sessions in each country, **chaired by a professional moderator**. Fees totalling 32,000 euros are foreseen for the **chairing of four sessions of each parliament** (10 x 4 x 800 euros).” (p. 41)*

It is important to add that the MeDeMAP General Assembly, in its meeting of 9 March 2023 clarified that the citizens’ parliaments would only be organized by five partners (and not all partners), and that for each citizen parliament, two moderators (and not one) would be hired. This is an extract from these General Assembly minutes:

“Error in the costs for COMMIT. The project officer should be informed in order to make an amendment to the grant agreement to correct the error. Five countries should be involved, and two moderators should chair each citizen parliament.” (GA minutes, 9 March 2023, item 4, page 2)

The proposal does not list which 5 partners will organize these citizen parliaments, but the allocation of person months (p. 35) indicates that these five partners are COMMIT (Vienna), CU (Prague), Mary Immaculate College (Limerick), Mirovni Inštitut (Ljubljana) and IULM (Milan). In addition, OEAW, Jagiellonski and ULHT have been allocated each 2 person months, in order to provide support to the core team.

Also the analytical framework is reasonably clearly described, as the proposal mentions, on several occasions, that this framework will be the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach. It is not entirely clear whether PAR will be used in other WPs as well, but the link to the “media map for future democracies” produces a clear connection between PAR and WP6.

“A particular challenge is the development of a ‘media map for future democracies’ as a counterpart to the “real” European media map, which is to be carried out together with citizens across Europe. Here, participatory action research methods will be used.” (p. 8)

PAR is described, together with a traditional visual representation of PAR that emphasizes its cyclical nature (p. 15), in the following terms:

“As an approach within the broad field of responsive science, PAR is based on open cooperative work and sharing of knowledge. Accordingly, we want to involve citizens, communities and civil society organizations in the co-creation of the agenda for the development and the content of a ‘media map for future democracies’.” (p. 14)

The circular model of PAR—in the proposal we find a reference to Defrijn et al. (2008), but this dates back to Lewin’s (1946) work on action research—mentions (1) Planning, (2) Acting, (3) Observing and (4) Reflecting, where the latter then connects to (1) Planning again. As already mentioned above, WP2 will be responsible, in Task 2.4, for the reflection component: “D2.4 will thus consist out of two parts, reporting on the (1) internal workshops

and reflection moments, and on (2) the reflection components of the of (sic) Participatory Action Research cycle.” (p. 31)

Still, it is not explained in the original proposal how this (4) Reflection component will connect back to the (1) Planning component, and the impression is created that these reflections are ex post reflections, which will not impact on the actual practice of the citizen parliaments. The transformation of a cyclical process into a linear process, with the reflections at the end, would create a contradiction with the basic principles of PAR, and thus needs to be avoided. This implies that several moments of reflections, involving the members of the citizens parliament, will need to be organized, allowing them, in a truly participatory way, to affect the next steps of the research. This creates a tension with the practical organization of the citizen parliaments, as they need some degree of stability in the different stages, and radical changes to the design and planning would limit the citizen parliaments’ ability to produce their reports.

A second gap in the original proposal is the thematic focus of the citizen parliament. Here, we find a tension between more general statements about this focus, which is, for instance, captured in the “Future roadmap for European media and democracy” title of D6.4 on the one hand, and the focus on participation on the other. The latter is illustrated by the following citations from the original proposal

- *“There will be a specific **focus on different forms and concepts of participation** that take into account different groups of citizens.” (p. 35)*
- *“... the research must also aim at an ‘expansion of active and inclusive citizenship’. This is realised by encouraging European citizens to design a political information environment according **to their needs and their ideas of political participation**, in order to find out whether the available media supply meets the actual demand (WP6).” (p. 26)*

The balance between general issues of “media and democracy” and the focus on participation needs to be further developed, also keeping in mind that the choice for PAR also includes the need to allow the members of the citizen parliaments to have a say on these more fundamental questions.

8.2 The operationalization proposal for Task 6.2

From the perspective of the theoretical WP2, a number of suggestions can be made, on (1) the thematic focus of the citizen parliaments, with three subthemes, (2) the organization of the training component, fixating a more maximalist definition of democracy, (3) the need to analyse the citizen parliaments as a struggle over media’s role in democracy, (4) the use of resolutions, majority decision-making and dissenting opinions in the citizen parliaments, and (5) the protection of the participation in and through the citizen parliaments.

Some of the key characteristics of the citizen parliaments in the original project proposal limit the number of themes that these meetings can handle. One important element here is the decision (in the original proposal) for each citizen parliament to have four meetings, which restricts the total number of topics that can be handled. It necessitates the creation of thematic clusters. Moreover, also the balance between the general project theme (“Media and Democracy”) and the focus on participation is an important element to be considered in the thematic choices.

On the basis of the theoretical framework (as captured in Deliverable 2.1), I propose to frame each citizen parliament as a citizen parliament on “Media and Democracy”, and to have the same three subthemes in each of the five citizen parliaments. In order to reconcile the participatory dimension—as captured in PAR—with the need to structure the citizen parliaments, the proposal is to fixate the three subthemes, and to organize a first one-day meeting with a training component, followed by three sessions (of that first meetings) where the elements of each subtheme will be developed, in a participatory fashion.

These elements will then be used in the three following meetings, also with a duration of at least one full day. Each of the three subthemes will be formulated as a question:

1. What are the structural characteristics of the media landscape to support democracy?

Potential elements come from D2.1’s section 7 (pluralism, freedom of expression, media freedom), section 8 (technological affordances, democratic media culture, legitimacy of democratic state regulation) and section 9 (economic sustainability, limiting marketization, trust, absence of violence);

2. What media content supports democracy?

Potential elements come from D2.1’s section 6 (information, watchdog, multiplicity of perspectives, representing the pluriformity of the social and the political) and section 7 (degrees and forms of media representation);

3. How can participation in and through the media support democracy?

Potential elements come from D2.1’s section 6 (facilitating public participation) and section 7 (degrees and forms of media participation).

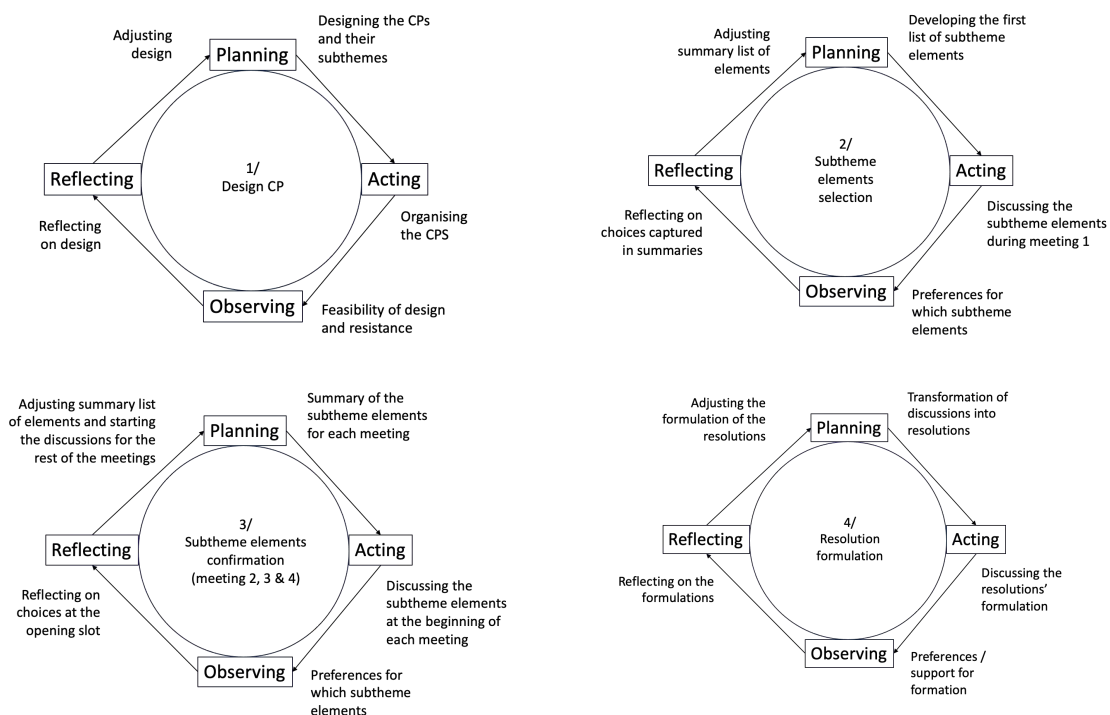
The choice for these subthemes implies that the complexities of the notion of democracy itself can hardly be unpacked. Our four sessions would not suffice to do that. For this reason, I propose the use the training component of the first meeting to discuss the diversity of democratic approaches (and the struggles over democracy), but also to fixate a maximalist approach towards democracy, not restricting democracy to politics, and not restricting it to its procedural dimension.

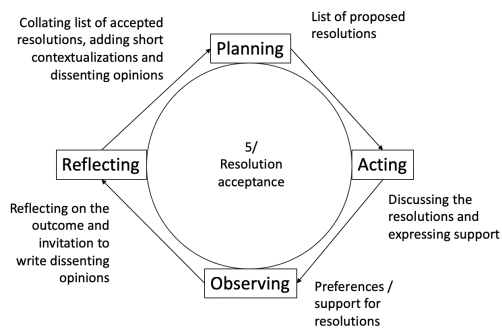
I also propose to reserve the other vital component of the theoretical framework, namely the struggle over media and democracy, for the analysis of the citizen parliaments (see the next Section 9, for more). The citizen parliaments themselves will be locations of struggle over the media’s role in democracy, which will provide us with data that we can then analyse. The main objective of the citizen parliaments should be the production of an action plan for each of the three subthemes, with a series of resolutions (as mentioned in the original proposal on p. 35), to be confirmed by the participants at the end of each meeting. The resolutions of the action plan will ideally be grounded in a consensus, but I would prefer to allow for majority decision-making combined with the formulation of dissenting opinions (to be written after a meeting ended), in case consensus cannot be reached. Proposed resolutions that have insufficient support can also be rejected. This is important, as we cannot expect a full consensus during the citizen parliament. Apart from preventing a total blockage, this part of the process will also be highly relevant for the (academic-)analytical stage of WP6, which follows the actual organization of the citizen parliaments.

Finally, the theoretical framework, which extensively deals with participation, also urges me to argue to take the participatory component of the PAR-methodology seriously. This can be translated, in practice, in different ways, at two levels: As participation *in* and *through* the citizen parliaments.

1. Participation in the citizen parliaments: We need to respect the preconditions of participation, namely access and interaction. Moreover, we need to avoid all too strong power imbalances in the citizen parliaments. We could, for instance, add citizen chairs to the two professional moderators, ensure the participants have a strong say in which elements are added / included in each of the subthemes, protect their ability to generate the resolutions, without too much influence from the moderators, etc. ...

Given the nature of PAR, it is also vital for the participants to be involved in the reflection, and to loop back into the planning. I propose to organize this by having the first meeting (of the four in total) on all the elements of the three subthemes (in three sessions), to have our core research team then summarize these proposed structures for each of the three subthemes, make this document available before the relevant subtheme meeting, and then to start each of the three subtheme meetings with a session on confirming or changing the agenda (of subtheme elements). This brings us to the following PAR iterations:





2. Participation through the citizen parliaments: We need to take the outcome of the citizen parliaments seriously, and not see them as mere data generation. This means that the resolutions of each subtheme of each citizen parliament need to be published, and properly communicated, as is indicated in the original proposal: *“The results of the citizens’ parliaments and their theory-driven evaluation will be made publicly available and distributed to relevant stakeholders”* (p. 36), but I would also recommend to strongly limit the presence of the “theory-driven evaluation” in this communication (e.g., to an afterword), in order not to overshadow the resolutions.

As we have also promised in our original proposal, we need to bring the results of the ‘local’ citizen parliaments to the European level. We might have forgotten to budget the involvement of members of the citizen parliaments, but we could produce a video with one or two representatives of each of the five citizen parliaments, communicating their results. This aligns with dissemination Task 7.3 (*“interviews as short documentaries to be included in the short video to be shot during workshops”*, p. 37) We could also organize a roundtable in Brussels, with one or two representatives of each of the five citizen parliaments, together with a series of invited European stakeholders from the fields of politics and media. This roundtable could be part of the impact workshop at the end of the project (as mentioned in Tasks 1.2 and 7.3).

9. Operationalization proposal for Task 6.3/6.4

By Nico Carpentier

9.1 Task 6.3/6.4 in the original proposal

These two tasks are only briefly described in the original proposal.

Task 6.3 is labelled “Analysis of the sessions and final decisions of citizens’ parliaments”, with the following sentence added to it (in the WP6 task descriptions): *“Based on the session minutes and resolutions, the results of the citizens’ parliaments will be analysed according to the analytical concepts developed in WP3, 4 and 5.”* (p. 35) The timing of this task, from month 26 to 36, indicates that the Deliverable 6.4, the “Future roadmap for European media and democracy” report, which needs to be completed at month 32, is exclusively connected to this Task 6.3.

The Task 6.3 description does not have specific references to methodology, but for this we can rely on the general WP6 methodological descriptions, where, for instance, on p. 30 of the

original proposal, it is mentioned that “WP6 (...) is using a Participatory Action Research approach, requiring permanent interaction between reflection (and theory-building) and action.” Earlier, the original proposal explained that “While the ‘real’ media map will be built with the help of traditional methods of empirical social science, the ‘future map’ should be created with methods of participatory action research (PAR).” (p. 14) The more general description of PAR was discussed in the previous Section 8. We also have a clear indication of the object of this analysis, as Task 6.3 will focus on the analysis of the “sessions and final decisions”, which in practice is translated as “session minutes and resolutions” (p. 35).

Still, we have several gaps that will need to be addressed by the WP6 team. First, there is, in the Task 6.3 description, a strong emphasis on the “analytical concepts developed in WP3, 4 and 5” (p. 35), which may be read to suggest that there is no theoretical support or framework needed for this analysis. This contrasts with the parts of the proposal where there is a strong emphasis on WP2’s theory-driven support for WP6, and with the basic principles of qualitative research. As will be further developed below, in Section 9.2, also Task 6.3 needs theoretical support. The second gap is in relation to methodology, where the original proposal does not provide much support for the research questions of Task 6.3, and about which (exact) data-gathering and data-analysis methods will be used. Still, the general methodology parts of the project refer to (qualitative) content analysis and discourse analysis (p. 8). Moreover, the strong emphasis on textual condensations of the citizen parliaments (“session minutes and resolutions”, p. 35) seems to exclude a focus on analysing the *processes* of the citizen parliaments. Here, the use of participant observation and ethnography, which feature prominently in the discussions of the general project’s methodology (p. 8, p. 16, ...), might provide a solution, as is actually—rather implicitly—suggested on p. 16 of the original proposal:

“The same applies to field protocols used in ethnographic research. All names of the persons participating in interviews, surveys and citizens’ parliaments will be anonymized.” (p. 16)

Task 6.4 is labelled “Evaluation of PAR research”, and described as follows: “Evaluation of the findings from the local citizens’ parliaments and reflection against the background of democratic theory and compilation in a joint report with general and country-specific results.” (p. 35) The timing of this task, from month 31 to 36, indicates that this evaluation is not to be included in the “Future roadmap for European media and democracy” report (D6.4), as this report needs to be ready in month 32 (one month after the start of Task 6.4, which makes it unfeasible to include the outcomes of this task in D6.4). This also implies that the Task 6.4 report (mentioned on p. 35 of the original proposal) has no deliverable of its own, at least not in WP6. But here, we need to return to the WP2 tasks, which include Task 2.4, the “Continuous theory-driven re-analysis of the project’s interventions”. In particular, WP2 has the “Theory-driven re-analysis of the project’s interventions” deliverable (D2.4, with deadline month 36). This deliverable will reflect on “(1) internal workshops and reflection moments, and on (2) the reflection components of the of (sic) Participatory Action Research cycle” (p. 31) We can thus assume that the results of the “Evaluation of PAR research” (Task 6.4) will find its place in the final WP2 deliverable (D2.4).

Also here, we find little detail in relation to the exact nature of this Task 6.4. Moreover, the analysis of Task 6.3 and Task 6.4 risk becoming too similar, and thus need to be more clearly distinguished from each other. Given the proximity between Task 2.4 and Task 6.4, and the absence of a proper deliverable for Task 6.4, I propose to define also Task 6.4 as a theoretical task, which will focus on the (re-)theorization of (a) the performance of participation in the

citizen parliaments, (b) the construction of democracy and (c) the construction of media in the processes and outputs of the citizen parliaments. This will be further developed in the next Section 9.2.

9.2 The operationalization proposal for Task 6.3/6.4

The main suggestion in the operationalization proposal for 6.3/6.4 is to ensure that there is sufficient theoretical support for the analysis of the citizen parliaments. Even though the analytical concepts developed in WP3, 4 and 5 are, in turn, grounded in the theoretical conceptualizations of WP2, I believe that it is necessary to ensure that the theoretical work of WP2s directly connects to the analyses in WP6.

I propose to have this theoretical framework play two roles in the analytical Task 6.3:

1/ Supporting the evaluation the outcomes / resolutions: Here the theoretical framework provides conceptual elaborations of the categories that will feature in the resolutions. But possibly even more importantly, the theoretical framework, captured in D2.1, provides also a frame of reference to discuss which dimensions are less significant or absent in the resolutions. Here, the research question could then become how the participants of the citizen parliaments envision the democratic role of media in the five countries. A secondary research question could be how these imaginaries are similar and different in the five countries.

2/ Bringing in the core theoretical notion of struggle into the analysis, by performing an evaluation of the struggle over media's roles in democracy: The citizen parliaments will be locations of struggle over the role of media in democracy, with intense discussions during the citizen parliaments, with resolutions revised, accepted and rejected, and with dissenting opinions being written. This analytical focus on struggle—inspired by the project's theoretical framework—will contribute substantially to the academic relevance of the project. The research question of this component then becomes at what discursive levels the citizen parliament participants' struggle is located.

For Task 6.4, one of the main concerns is the potential overlap with Task 2.4 (and Deliverable 2.4) from the theoretical WP2, and the need to clearly differentiate between Task 6.3 and Task 6.4. Here, my proposal is to integrate the output of Task 6.4 into D2.4, with the following three analytical-theoretical focal points, driven by the need to study the participatory process itself (within the framework of PAR, which is the basic remit of Task 6.4), and to use a more abstract / bird's eye analytical perspective, to differentiate this Task 6.4 analysis from Task 6.3 and D6.4 (the roadmap).

1/Analysis (and re-theorization) of the performance of participation in the five countries: This focal point would gain support from the theoretical discussions on participation in D2.1, while this would also connect to the evaluation of how PAR was deployed in the project. In particular the reflection moments in the PAR cycles would provide precious data on how the citizen parliaments would empower the participants of the citizen parliaments (or not). The analysis (and its re-theorization) of the participatory intensities of the citizen parliaments themselves (participation in the CP), and their role in policy debates on media and democracy (participation through the CP) would also allow to clearly differentiate this analysis from the analysis in Task 6.3. The research question here would be what the participatory intensities of the five citizen parliaments is, on the scale of minimalist/maximalist participation.

2/Analysis (and re-theorization) of the construction of democracy in the five countries: This focal point is particularly supported by Part 1 of the theoretical framework, as captured in D2.1, with its focus on core characteristics of democracy, areas of struggle, conditions of possibility and threats. The focus on the discursive articulation of democracy would generate a more abstract analysis, distinct from Task 6.3. Here, it is important to note that though the citizen parliaments will use a broad definition of democracy (not restricting it to politics and procedures) it is still likely that different definitions of democracy will be used, and thus can be analysed. The research question here is how the participants of the citizen parliaments articulate the concept of democracy.

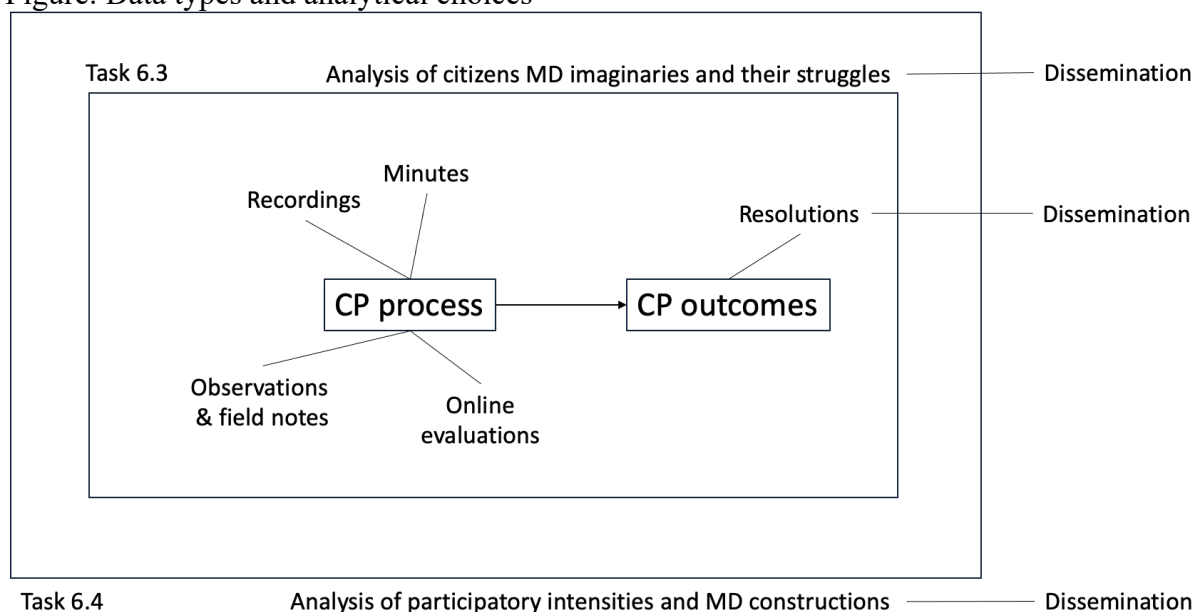
3/Analysis (and re-theorization) of the construction of media in the five countries: This last focal point is supported by Part 2 of the theoretical framework, with its discussion on core characteristics of media, areas of struggle, conditions of possibility and threats. Again, also here the objective is to generate a more abstract analysis, to ensuring that there is a difference with Task 6.3. The research question is thus how the participants of the citizen parliaments articulate the concept of media.

In both Task 6.3 and Task 6.4, it is important to ensure that sufficient data is gathered, in order to allow for these analyses (supported by their analytical-theoretical focal points). The original proposal, with only “*session minutes and resolutions*” as data, needs to be expanded, to also include the following data:

- Observations and field notes (using participant observation, and ethnography);
- Recordings of the sessions of the citizen parliaments (also in breakout room scenarios), which are then transcribed;
- Short process evaluations of the participants in-between the sessions (online).

The Figure below provides on overview of these different data types, and the different analytical choices proposed in this note.

Figure: Data types and analytical choices



Finally, it is important to stress the need to have a clear structure and timeline for the organization of the citizen parliaments. These are the proposed steps for their organization, analysis and dissemination:

- Design of the CP and its subthemes (Task 6.2);
- Recruitment of participants and PAR cycle 1 (with adjustments of the design);
- Recruitment of moderators and experts;
- Meeting 1: General training and subtheme element selection for the three pre-set subthemes (PAR cycle 2);
- After meeting 1: Producing and communicating three lists of subthemes;
- Meeting 2-4: Specific subtheme training, subtheme element consolidation (PAR cycle 3), element discussions, resolution drafting (PAR cycle 4) and resolution acceptance (PAR cycle 5);
- At the end of meeting 4: Recording of short video interviews (Task 7.3)
- After meetings 2-4: (1) Producing and communicating the summaries (minutes), with the accepted/rejected resolutions and the invitations for dissenting opinions; (2) Writing up the resolutions report of the subtheme (with the dissenting opinions included) and asking for participant approval of the resolutions report, together with (3) a short online process evaluation by the participants; (4) writing a blog posting after each of the three meetings (D6.3);
- After meeting 4: Integration of the three subthemes resolutions reports into one, approval by the participants, and final CP resolutions report dissemination;
- Data analysis for Task 6.3 and reporting in D6.4;
- Data analysis for Task 6.2 and reporting integrated into D2.4;
- Production of leaflets and online guidance on participatory media practices (D6.5);
- Brussels roundtable with CP participant representatives, as part of the concluding impact workshop (Task 1.2 and 7.3).

Afterthoughts

For this kind of deliverable, the closure that the word ‘conclusion’ suggests would be inappropriate, as this is a text that is meant to be worked with, and worked on. In one way, it is a very technical and deeply internal document, hard to be understood by those who are not part of the MeDeMAP project, with its many references to work packages and tasks. At the same time, it is a crucial document that engages in a dialogue with an original proposal, and with a diversity of research teams, which renders it an intermediate step.

In this sense, it is a fascinating document that makes (research) time stop, and condenses a particular moment of the research process—with its normally endless and ephemeral conversations and negotiations—into a document, with many ideas frozen in time, for a very brief instant. Moreover, the document shows the complexities of the research design of a large consortium-driven project, and how each decision—from the writing of the original document, over its implementation, to the production of the outputs—has its imperfections, but also its opportunities. As we will continue to unfreeze the ideas captured in this document—and embrace, alter or reject them—we will be able to move closer to our research results, which—however imperfect they will be—promise to structurally contribute to our knowledge about the media-democracy relationship.

Literature and References

- Alexander, Jeffrey C. (1981). “The Mass News Media in Systemic, Historical and Comparative Perspective”, Elihu Katz and Tamás Szecskö (eds.) *Mass Media and Social Change*, Beverly Hills: Sage, pp. 17–51.
- Alexander, Jeffrey C. (2015). “The Crisis of Journalism Reconsidered: Cultural Power”, in Jeffrey C. Alexander, Elizabeth Breese, and Maria Luengo (eds.) *The Crisis of Journalism to Reconsidered: Cultural Power*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ang, Ien (1991). *Desperately Seeking the Audience*. London: Routledge.
- Bleyer-Simon, Konrad, Brogi, Elda, Carlini, Roberta, Nenadic, Iva, Palmer, Marie, Parcu, Pier Luigi, Verza, Sofia, Viola de Azevedo Cunha, Mario, Žuffová, Mária (2020). *Monitoring Media Pluralism in the Digital Era: Application of the Media Pluralism Monitor in the European Union, Albania, Montenegro, Republic of North Macedonia, Serbia & Turkey in the Year 2020*. San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute, <https://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/71970>.
- Bühlmann, Marc, Merkel, Wolfgang, Müller, Lisa, Giebel, Heiko, Weßels, Bernhard (2012). “Demokratiebarometer: Ein neues Instrument zur Messung von Demokratiequalität”, *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft*, 6(1): 115–159.
- Carpentier, Nico (2003). “BBC’s Video Nation as a Participatory Media Practice. Signifying Everyday Life, Cultural Diversity and Participation in an On-Line Community”, *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 6(4): 425–447.
- Carpentier, Nico (2011). *Media and Participation: A Site of Ideological-Democratic Struggle*. Bristol: Intellect.
- Carpentier, Nico, Wimmer, Jeffrey (2023). *Democracy and Media: A Discursive-Material Approach, Deliverable 2.1.*, Prague: Culture and Communication Research Centre, Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism, Charles University.
- CMPF et al. (2022). Study on Media Plurality and Diversity Online, <https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/475bacb6-34a2-11ed-8b77-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-266738523>.

- Council of Europe (2007). Recommendation CM/Rec(2007)15 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Measures Concerning Media Coverage of Election Campaigns, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 November 2007, https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=09000016805d4a3d.
- Council of Europe (2009). Declaration of the Committee of Ministers on the Role of Community Media in Promoting Social Cohesion and Intercultural Dialogue, from <https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=1409919>.
- Council of Europe (2018). Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)1 of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on Media Pluralism and Transparency of Media Ownership, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 7 March 2018 at the 1309th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectId=0900001680790e13.
- Croteau, David, Hoynes, William (2014). *Media/Society: Industries, Images, and Audiences (5th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Curran, James (2002). *Media and Power*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Dahlgren, Peter, Alvares, Claudia (2013). "Political participation in an age of mediatisation. Towards a new research agenda", *Javnost – The Public*, 20(2): 47–66.
- Defrijn, Sven, Mathijs, Erik, Gulinck, Hubert, Lauwers, Ludwig (2008). "Facilitating and evaluating farmer innovations towards more sustainable energy and material flows: Case-study in Flanders. Empowerment of the rural actors: a renewal of farming systems a renewal of farming systems perspectives", *Proceedings 8th European IFSA Symposium*, Clermont-Ferrand, France, 6-10 July, 2008, Montpellier: INRA, pp. 765–773.
- Deselaers, Peter, James, Kyle, Mikhael, Roula, Schneider, Laura (2019). *More than Money: Rethinking Media Viability in the Digital Age*, DW Akademie discussion paper, <https://akademie.dw.com/en/more-than-money-rethinking-media-viability-in-the-digital-age/a-47825791>.
- Donders, Karen (2021). *Public Service Media in Europe: Law, Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge.
- Dror, Yehezkel (1957). "Values and the Law", *The Antioch Review*, 17(4): 440–454.
- Habermas, Jürgen (2006). "Political Communication in Media Society: Does Democracy Still Enjoy an Epistemic Dimension? The Impact of Normative Theory on Empirical Research", *Communication Theory*, 16 (4): 411–426.
- Kelbel, Camille, Marx, Axel, Navarro, Julien (2021). "Access or Excess? Redefining the boundaries of transparency in the EU's decision-making", *Politics and Governance*, 9(1): 221–225.
- Klimkiewicz, Beata (2009). "Structural Media Pluralism and Ownership Revisited: The Case of Central and Eastern Europe", *Journal of Media Business Studies*, 6(3): 43–63.
- Klimkiewicz, Beata (2014). *A Polyvalent Media Policy in the Enlarged European Union*. Cracow: Jagiellonian University Press. <https://wuj.pl/ksiazka/a-polyvalent-media-policy-in-the-enlarged-european-union>.
- Klimkiewicz, Beata (2021). "The Public Sphere and the Changing News Media Environment in Poland: Towards Structural Polarisation", *Javnost – The Public*, 28(1): 53–74.
- Konrath, Christoph (2023). "Values and Laws", in Regina Polak and Patrick Rohs (eds.) *Values – Politics – Religion: The European Values Study. In-Depth Analysis – Interdisciplinary Perspectives – Future Prospects*. Cham: Springer, pp. 369–390.
- Kubicek, Herbert (1997). "Das Internet auf dem Weg zum Massenmedium? Ein Versuch, Lehren aus der Geschichte alter und neuer Medien zu ziehen", in Raymund Werle and Christa Lang (eds.), *Modell Internet? Entwicklungsperspektiven neuer*

- Kommunikationsnetze (Model Internet? Development Perspectives of New Communication Networks)*. Frankfurt: Campus, pp. 213–239.
- Lewin, Kurt (1946). “Action research and minority problems”, *Journal of Social Issues*, 2: 34–46.
- Littlejohn, Stephen W. (1996). *Theories of Human Communication*. Southbank: Wadsworth.
- Lucas, Edward (2020). *Firming Up Democracy’s Soft Underbelly: Authoritarian Influence and Media Vulnerability* (Sharp Power and Democratic Resilience Series), Washington: National Endowment for Democracy. <https://www.ned.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Firming-Up-Democracys-Soft-Underbelly-Authoritarian-Influence-and-Media-Vulnerability-Lucas.pdf>.
- McQuail, Denis (2003). *McQuail’s Mass Communication Theory: 6th edition*, London: Sage. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/book/mcquails-mass-communication-theory-3>
- Miconi, Andrea, Serra, Marcello (2019). “On the Concept of Medium: An Empirical Study”, *International Journal of Communication*, 13(2019): 3444–3461.
- Oster, Jan (2017). *European and International Media Law*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Raeijmaekers, Danielle, Maesele, Pieter (2015). “Media, Pluralism and Democracy: What’s in a Name?”, *Media, Culture and Society*, 37(7): 1042–1050.
- Reese, Stephen D. Reese, Kook Lee, Jae (2012). “Understanding the Content of News Media”, in Holli A. Semetko and Margaret Scammell (eds). *The SAGE Handbook of Political Communication*, Beverly Hills: Sage, pp. 253–263.
- Schnell, Sabina (2016). “From Information to Predictability: Transparency on the Path to Democratic Governance: The Case of Romania”, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 84(4), 692–710.
- Schudson, Michael (2017). “How to Think Normatively about News and Democracy”, in Kate Kenski and Kathleen Hall Jamieson (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Communication*, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 95–108.
- Schudson, Michael (2022). “What Does ‘Trust in the Media’ Mean?”, *Daedalus*, 151(4): 144–160.
- Stiglitz, Joseph (2002). “Transparency in Government”, in The World Bank (ed.) *The Right to Tell. The Role of Mass Media in Economic Development*. Washington DC: The World Bank, pp. 27–44.
- Tambini, Damian (2021). *Media freedom*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Van Drunen, Max (2021). “Editorial Independence in an Automated Media System”, *Internet Policy Review*, 10(3), <https://policyreview.info/articles/analysis/editorial-independence-automated-media-system>.
- Voltmer, Katrin (2013). *The Media in Transitional Democracies*. Cambridge: Polity Press.