Sveučilište u Zagrebu

1. GENERAL INFORMATION			
1.1. Lecturer in the course	Prof. dr.sc. Zrinjka Peruško	1.6. Year of the study program	4th
1.2. Name of the course	Political information environments in CEE	1.7. ECTS points	7
1.3. Associate lecturers		1.8. Type of instruction (lectures and seminars)	Lectures 30 Seminars 30
1.4. Study program (undergraduate, graduate)	Graduate	1.9.	
1.5. Status of the course	Optional	1.10.	
2. COURSE DESCRIPTION			
2.1.Course objectives	The course will outline the problematic of understanding the changes in the public sphere in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). In agreement with Barbara Pfetsch (2018) who argues for the empirical examination of hybridity in relation to the disconnections and dissonance in the public sphere, the course will take a snapshot of the empirical situation in the CEE countries. By applying the framework of the political information environment in van Aelst el at. (2017) to the CEE, the course will show what we know about the six areas which are necessary to understand the shaping of citizens' democratic engagement: supply of political information, quality of news, media concentration and diversity of news, fragmentation and polarization, relativism in news and the degree of inequality in political knowledge. Because a great deal of research and existing knowledge mapping is missing, the students will participate in collection and mapping of research for each of the key areas which define the political information environment. In order to evaluate the possibility of citizens to participate in democracy based on their informed opinion and decision making we should investigate their political information environments. The course will start with the framing of the present hybrid public sphere as a consequence of the critical juncture, or crisis, in the communication system and argues that resulting changes differ according to various broader country contexts. The argument is developed next that in some instances the hybridity of the communication system is doubled by the hybridity in the political system, where the crisis is manifested by the increased use of old political logics and practices which predate democratic times alongside new media logics from the digital age.		

2.2. Course enrolment requirements and entry competences required for the course	BA in social sciences and humanities
2.3. Learning outcomes at the level of the programme to which the course contributes*	• Students will acquire an advanced level of communication competence in written and spoken, as well as visual and other forms of non-verbal communication; develop advanced skills in writing academic papers, and be able to structure academic and other texts. (1.1.) • Students will develop an advanced level of searching secondary databases and using modern communication technologies and platforms. (1.2.) • Students will acquire basic knowledge about theories and concepts relevant in social sciences and can critically evaluate them (1.5.) • Students will be able to describe, define, explain and compare advanced theoretical concepts in the field of media, communications and the public sphere. (2.2.) • Students will be able to describe, define and explain the role of the political information environment in democracy. (2.2.)
2.4. Learning outcomes	*1. Understand and critically interpret the role of the information environment for politics in CEE* *2. Understand political implications and implications for democracy of different information environments in various countries in CEE* *3. Understand and apply the comparative method in analyzing aspects of information environments in CEE* *4. Understand the contemporary structural transformation of the hybrid public sphere*
2.5. Course content in detail by the weekly class schedule (syllabus)	1. How to do comparative research in communication (in post-socialist countries) 2. Platform society and hybrid media system 3. Supply of political information 4. Audiences news related practices and news repertoires 5. Quality of news, media concentration and diversity of news 6. Fragmentation and polarization of the media and public sphere 7. Post-factual relativism in news – misinformation & disinformation in the post-truth era 8. Degree of inequality of political knowledge 9. Structural influencing factors 1: quality of democracy 10. Structural influencing factors 2: media freedom and autonomy

	11. Structural influencing factors 3: historical trajectories, longue durée and the socialist past 12. Hybrid public spheres in CEE: double hybridity of old political and new media logics		

	☒ **Lectures** ☒ **seminars and workshops** ☐ Exercises ☐ *Online* ☐ partial e-learning ☐ field work	☒ **independent assignments** ☐ multimedia and internet ☐ laboratory ☐ mentored work ☐ other	**b. Comments:**
a. Format of instructions			

c. Student responsibilities	• Regular attendance at classes. • Seminar activities (presentations, debates, workshops). • Seminar project. • Written exam.

d. Screening student work	Class attendance	2	Research		Practical training	
	Experimental work		Report		**Activity during seminar**	1
	Essay		Seminar essay/project	2		
	Tests		Oral exam			
	Written exam	2	Other projects			

2.1. Grading and evaluating student work in class and at the final exam	The final grade of success in the subject is determined based on the sum of the points collected during classes, obligatory seminar project and through the final written take-home exam. For a passing final grade in the course, students must obtain a minimum of 60 points in total (scale: 60-69=2; 70-79=3; 80-89=4; 90-100=5).

2.2. Required literature (available in the library and via other media)	1. Aalberg, T., Blekesaune, A. and Elvestad, E. (2013) Media Choice and Informed Democracy: Toward Increasing News Consumption Gaps in Europe? *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 18(3) 281–303. 2. Aelst, P. Van, Strömbäck, J., Aalberg, T., Esser, F., Vreese, C. de., Matthes, J., Hopmann, D. (2017). Political Communication in a High-Choice Media Environment: A Challenge for Democracy? *Annals of the International Communication Association* 41 (1): 3–27.		

	https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2017.1288551.
	3. Bennet, L.W., Pfetsch, B. (2018) Rethinking Political Communication in a Time of Disrupted Public Spheres. *Journal of Communication* 68 (2018) 243–253.
	4. Habermas, J. 2023. A New Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere and Deliberative Politics.
2.12. Optional literature (at the time of submission of study program proposal)	Adoni, H., Peruško, Z., Nossek, H. and Schrøder, K.C. (2017). Introduction: News consumption as a democratic resource – News media repertoires across Europe. *Participations, Journal of Audience & Reception Studies.* 14 (2) 226-252.
	Blumler, Jay G. (2013) "The Fourth Age of Political Communication" Keynote address delivered at a Workshop on Political Communication Online, the Free University of Berlin, September 12, 2013. http://www.fgpk.de/2013/gastbeitrag-von-jay-g-blumler-the-fourth-age-of-political-communication-2/
	Bucy, E.P., Evans, H.K. (2021): Media-centric and Politics-centric Views of Media and Democracy: A Longitudinal Analysis of Political Communication and the International Journal of Press/Politics, *Political Communication*, DOI: 10.1080/10584609.2021.1966595
	Blumler, J. G., and Gurevitch, M. (1995). *The Crisis of Public Communication*. London: Routledge.
	Castro-Herrero, L., Hopmann, D.N. and Engesser, S. (2016) Parties, Ideology, and News Media in Central-Eastern and Western Europe: A Comparison of Media Bias Twenty Years after the Fall of the Iron Curtain. *East European Politics and Societies and Cultures* Volume 30 Number 3 571–593.
	Chadwick, Andrew. (2017) *The Hybrid Media System*: Politics and Power. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
	Engesser, Sven, Franzetti, Annika (2011) Media systems and political systems: Dimensions of comparison. *the International Communication Gazette* 73(4) 273–301
	Esser, F., & Hanitzsch, T. (2012a) On the why and how of comparative inquiry in communication studies. In F. Esser & T. Hanitzsch (Eds.), *Handbook of comparative communication research* (pp. 3–22). London: Routledge.
	Esser, F., & Pfetsch, B. (2017). Comparing Political Communication. pp. 327-345. In D. Caramani (Ed.), *Comparative*

Politics. Fourth updated edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Esser, Frank, Vliegenthart, Rens (2017) Comparative Research Methods. *The International Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*. Jörg Matthes (General Editor), Christine S. Davis and Robert F. Potter (Associate Editors). John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Flew, Terry, Silvio Waisbord (2015) The ongoing significance of national media systems in the context of media globalization. *Media, Culture & Society* 2015, Vol. 37(4) 620–636

Hallin, Daniel C. & Paolo Mancini (2016) Ten Years After Comparing Media Systems: What Have We Learned?, *Political Communication*, 00:1–17, 2016.

Newman, N. with Fletcher, R., Eddy, K., Robertson, C.T. and Nielsen, R.K. (2023) *Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2023*. Oxford: University of Oxford.

Peruško, Z. (in print) Public communication in Central and Eastern European Democracies. In Stephen Coleman, Frank Esser, Julie Firmstone, Katy Parry, Chris Paterson, Eds. *Public Communication in Freefall*. Palgrave Macmillan. forthcoming.

Peruško, Z. with Lauk, E. and Harro-Loit, J. (2024 in print) *European Media Systems for Deliberative Communication: Risks and Opportunities*. Routledge Studies in Media, Communication, and Politics. London and New York: Routledge.

Peruško, Z., Vozab, D. Čuvalo, A. (2021). *Comparing Post-Socialist Media Systems. The case of Southeast Europe*. London. Routledge. (Godišnja nagrada za znanost RH; shortlisted za *Karol Jakubowicz Media and Democracy 2021 Award*)

Peruško, Zrinjka. (2021). Public Sphere in Hybrid Media Systems in Central and Eastern Europe. *Javnost – The Public*. https://doi.org/10.1080/13183222.2021.1861405.

2.12. Quality assurance methods that ensure the acquisition of exit competences	Monitoring and evaluating activities on teaching and seminar activities. Evaluation of the seminar work of the project. Evaluation of acquired knowledge through a written exam.