

EDITORIAL

Dear Reader, we are pleased to present a new issue of *Media Research*. Now in its thirty-second year of publication, the journal remains committed to its editorial policy and continues to publish scholarly articles that have successfully passed a double-blind peer-review process, with both reviews being positive. In the four articles included in this issue, the authors examine media practice from a range of perspectives and offer valuable theoretical and empirical insights.

Irena Mustać Klepac, Ivan Balabanić, and Lina Malek examine the “**Motivation of Secondary School Students for Participation in Online Public Consultations on Legislation**”. Building on previous research showing that public interest in e-consultations has not increased despite the growing availability of information and communication technologies, the authors focus on the technologically more literate segment of the secondary school population in order to investigate the factors influencing young people’s decisions to participate. In the first phase of the study, the authors analysed official reports of the Government of the Republic of Croatia on public consultations conducted between 2015 and 2022, as well as reports issued by the Information Commissioner on the implementation of the Right of Access to Information Act. In the second phase, a survey was conducted among 239 secondary school students in Primorje-Gorski Kotar County and Zadar County during May and June 2024, with the aim of examining whether parents’ formal education, digital literacy, school-based civic education, and student motivation influence students’ willingness to participate in e-consultations. The collected data were analysed using the chi-square test, logistic regression, and the independent-samples t-test. The findings indicate that parents’ formal education significantly influences students’ decisions to participate in e-consultations, whereas digital literacy has no statistically significant effect. School-based civic education proved to be the most important factor, significantly increasing students’ motivation to participate.

In their article “**Connected but Divided: Affective Publics and the Clash of Communities on Croatian Reddit in the Context of the 2024 Elections**”, Tamara Kunić and Luka Šikić examine Croatian virtual communities on Reddit as a digital public sphere reflecting broader patterns of social cohesion, exclusion, and participatory inequality. Drawing on theories of virtual communities and networked publics, the authors explore how Croatian Reddit communities communicate, construct boundaries, and articulate collective identities through expressions of sentiment during major social events—the 2024 parliamentary elections and the elections to the European Parliament. The study employs network analysis, sentiment analysis, and topic modelling on a sample of 11,503 comments collected between March and June 2024 in order to examine how communities connect with one another, diverge, and bridge their differences. The authors conceptualise this phenomenon as an “interactional clash of communities”, defining it as an identity-conditioned configuration in which distinct groups remain separate while continuously engaging in emotionally charged interactions. The findings confirm

the importance of fostering inclusive communication practices and recognising emotional dynamics as key factors in shaping social cohesion and democratic participation in contemporary digital environment.

Nikša Sviličić, in his article **“Communicative Aspects of Tattoo Visibility: The Body as a Medium in Professional Social Contexts”**, starts from the premise that tattoos are perceived as permanent bodily inscriptions which, once made visible, move beyond the private sphere and become subject to social perception, interpretation, and evaluation. The aim of the study is to explore some of the ways in which tattoos are perceived, as well as some of the communicative consequences of their visibility.

The theoretical framework of the study is grounded in symbolic interactionism, the semiotic understanding of the body as a sign system, the dramaturgical theory of impression management, and concepts of symbolic capital and the normative regulation of the body. The empirical part of the study is based on a quantitative survey conducted on a convenience sample of 704 tattooed adults in Croatia. The findings indicate that greater tattoo visibility is associated with a heightened perception of professional risk and with expectations of negative evaluations in professionally relevant interactions. The results further show that tattooed individuals regulate the visibility of their tattoos situationally, concealing them in interactions with authority figures, which points to a tension between the expression of personal autonomy and adaptation to social norms.

In their article **“Stylistic Features of Sports Commentators: The Case of Football Match Commentary”**, Magdalena Bilkić Barić and Suzana Peran examine certain characteristics of sports commentators’ speech, placing particular emphasis on the expressive devices they employ when commenting on sporting events during television broadcasts.

Using content analysis, the authors analyse two FIFA World Cup matches and one match from the Croatian national football league. Particular attention in the stylistic analysis is devoted to the use of the “we/they” formulation, the ways in which players are referred to, the use of exclamations and periods of silence, and the use of stereotypes and anglicisms. The findings show that commentators most frequently refer to football players by their surnames, that they employ the “we/they” formulation in broadcasts involving the Croatian national football team, and that they often use periods of silence and information unrelated to the immediate course of play in order to heighten the drama and enhance the appeal of football matches.

In addition to scholarly articles, this issue also includes three reviews of recent books in the field of communication studies, as well as an announcement of the conference “Media Laws: Theory and Practice”, which will be held in Zagreb in 2027.

We invite you to submit your scholarly articles featuring theoretical or empirical research, as well as book or conference reviews, and to share your suggestions, comments, praise, and criticism. We also invite you to follow us on Hrcak. Our page, <https://hrcak.srce.hr/mediaresearch>, has recorded 1,907,528 visits, and all published articles by domestic and international authors are available in full text.