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# News Consumption and Politics in Central and Eastern Europe

**Adult Participant Information Sheet**

**Investigators Details:**

Principal Investigator: Dr Václav Štětka, Loughborough University, School of Social Sciences, Ashby Road, LE11 3TU, Loughborough, E-mail: [V.Stetka@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:V.Stetka@lboro.ac.uk)

Co-Investigator: Professor Sabina Mihelj, Loughborough University, School of Social Sciences, Ashby Road, LE11 3TU, Loughborough, E-mail: [S.Mihelj@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:S.Mihelj@lboro.ac.uk)

Local Research Assistant: [Insert name and contact.]

**We would like to invite you to take part in our study, and we would like you to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Before data collection commences one of our team will be able to answer any questions you might have.**

**What is the purpose of the study?** This research is part of a larger project that seeks to understand the role of news consumption and changing media technologies in citizens’ political engagement. It focuses on four countries: Czechia, Hungary, Poland and Serbia. Most of existing research on these issues has been conducted in Western Europe and the USA. This is the first comparative study that focuses on Central and Eastern Europe, and we expect it to bring important new insights into the relationship between media and politics, from the perspective of citizens.

**Who is doing this research and why?** This research project is led by Dr Štětka and Professor Mihelj. Both are experts in media, politics and culture in Central and Eastern Europe, and want to use this project to deepen their knowledge in this area, as well as to develop recommendations for media professionals and policy makers. They are assisted by several local researchers, including [insert RA name] in [insert your country]. The project is funded by the UK Economic and Social Research Council, one of the main research funding bodies in the UK.

**Are there any exclusion criteria?** No.

**What will I be asked to do?** You will be required to participate in two interview sessions - one in February, the other in April – and you will also be asked to keep a diary during March 2020. Further details on the diary are provided in the diary form.

**Once I take part, can I change my mind?** Yes. After you have read this information and asked any questions you may have if you are happy to participate we will ask you to complete an Informed Consent Form, however if at any time, before, during or after the sessions you wish to withdraw from the study please just contact the main investigator. You can withdraw at any time, for any reason and you will not be asked to explain your reasons for withdrawing.However, once the results of the study are aggregated (expected to be by end of April 2020), it may not be possible to withdraw your individual data from the research.

**Will I be asked to attend any sessions and where will these be?** You will be asked to participate in two interviews, which will take place at a time and in a location convenient for you.

**How long will it take?** The interview sessions will last around 1 hour each. You will be asked to keep a diary for three weeks.

**Is there anything I need to do before the sessions?** Please read this information sheet and the diary from and prepare any questions you might have before the first interview session.

**Are there any disadvantages or risks in participating?** No.

**What are the possible benefits of participating?** You will be offered a payment in the value of [insert sum in local currency as stated in the survey questionnaire] to cover the costs of your participation. Your participation will play an important role in advancing academic knowledge and will also inform practical advice and recommendations for media practitioners and policymakers.

**Who should I send the completed media diary back to?** Please send the completed diary to [insert name and contact of local RA].

**Data Protection Privacy Notice**

Loughborough University will be using information/data from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. This means that the University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University’s Data Protection Officer can be contacted at: [dp@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:dp@lboro.ac.uk).

**What personal information will be collected from me?**

We will record your name, gender, age, city/town of residence, education, occupation, whether you voted in the last elections, and (if yes) which party you voted for. We will also ask your views on selected political, social and cultural issues. Given the nature of the study it is possible that you will want to mention sensitive personal information (e.g. political opinions) either in the interview or in the media diary.

**Why is this personal information being collected?** We are collecting this personal data to be able to understand how demographic factors (e.g. age, gender) affect people’s news consumption and political engagement (or lack thereof).

**How long will my personal data be retained?** Interview recordings will be kept for a maximum of ten years, while anonymised interview transcripts and media diaries will be kept permanently (subject to consent being given). The UK Data Service (UKDS) will be used for the long-term storage of curated data (anonymized transcripts and diaries) from the project.

**Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?** Measures will be taken to ensure anonymity of participants. Participants will be assigned a reference number and data will be stored against this number rather than against the names of participants. All interview recordings, interview transcripts and media diaries will be anonymized, with all information that could directly or indirectly help identify interviewees removed to ensure that any risks are minimized. Media diaries will be anonymized at the point of collection by relevant team members, with any references to identifying information (e.g. personal names) removed or replaced with reference numbers. Interviews will undergo a further round of anonymization at the point of transcription.

**How will the data collected from me be used?** The results of the study will be used as a basis for different research outputs, including scholarly books, journal articles, reports and training material for media practitioners and policy makers, conference papers and similar. Data will either be presented in aggregated form or using anonymised excerpts from interviews and diaries.

**What is the legal basis for processing the data?** The project will follow a Data Management Plan which conforms to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and institutional codes of practice, including password protected files and secure online storage mechanisms. The legal basis under which we will processing personal data will be ‘public task’. As personal data is processed on the basis of public task, individuals’ rights to erasure and data portability do not apply. However, individuals do have a right to object.  Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), some of the personal data which will be collected from you is categorised as ‘sensitive data’. The processing of this data is necessary for scientific research in accordance with safeguards. This means that study has gone through an ethical committee to ensure that the appropriate safeguards are put in place with respect to the use of your personal data.

**Will my data be shared with others?** Your data will be shared among research investigators involved in the study. Upon depositing data in the UK Data Service, other researchers will be able to request access, subject to terms and conditions that are designed to ensure anonymity.

**How long will the anonymised data/samples be retained?** Interview recordings will be kept for up to ten years after the end of the project. Anonymised interview transcripts and media diaries will be stored permanently in the UK Data Service repository.

**I have some more questions; who should I contact?** You can discuss any other questions during your first interview session. If you’d prefer to do so in advance you can email [insert RA contact]. If you have any other questions regarding Data Protection at the University, please do contact the Data Protection Officer on [dp@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:dp@lboro.ac.uk) or write to: Data Protection Officer, Academic Registry, Loughborough University, Loughborough, Leics, UK LE11 3TU.

**What if I am not happy with how the research was conducted?** If you are not happy with how the research was conducted, please contact the Secretary of the Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee, Research Office, Hazlerigg Building, Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough, LE11 3TU. Tel: 01509 222423. Email: [researchpolicy@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:researchpolicy@lboro.ac.uk)**.** The University also has policies relating to Research Misconduct and Whistle Blowing which are available online at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/committees/ethics-approvals-human-participants/additionalinformation/codesofpractice/>. If you have taken steps to have a concern or complaint about Loughborough University’s handling of data resolved but are still not satisfied you have a right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner’s Office (ico), who are the relevant regulator for data privacy and protection matters. The ico can be contacted at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, SK9 5AF and your will find more information at <https://ico.org.uk>.

## **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

## **(to be completed after Participant Information Sheet has been read)**

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| **Taking Part** | **Please initial to confirm agreement** |
| The purpose and details of this study have been explained to me. I understand that this study is designed to further scientific knowledge and that all procedures have been approved by the Loughborough University Ethics Approvals (Human Participants) Sub-Committee. | **--------------------** |
| I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form. | **--------------------** |
| I have had an opportunity to ask questions about my participation. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that taking part in the project will involve being audio recorded. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that the personal information collected includes my name, gender, age, city/town of residence, education, occupation, views on a selection of social, political and cultural issues, whether you voted in the last elections, and (if yes) which party you voted for. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that sensitive personal information such as political views may be collected during this study. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that I am under no obligation to take part in the study, have the right to withdraw from this study at any stage for any reason, and will not be required to explain my reasons for withdrawing. | **--------------------** |
| **Use of Information** |  |
| I understand that all the personal information I provide will be processed in accordance with data protection legislation on the public task basis and will be treated in strict confidence unless (under the statutory obligations of the agencies which the researchers are working with), it is judged that confidentiality will have to be breached for the safety of the participant or others or for audit by regulatory authorities. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that information I provide will be used for scholarly publications, reports and other research-based outputs. | **--------------------** |
| I understand that personal information collected about me that can identify me, such as my name or where I live, will not be shared beyond the study team. | **--------------------** |
| I agree that information I provide can be quoted anonymously in research outputs. | **--------------------** |
| I agree to joint copyright of my diary with Sabina Mihelj and [insert RA name]. | **--------------------** |
| I give permission for the anonymised interview transcripts and media diary to be deposited in the UK Data Archive so that it can be made publicly available for future research at the end of the project. | **--------------------** |
| **Consent to Participate** |  |
| **I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.** | **--------------------** |

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Name of participant [printed] Signature Date

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Researcher [printed] Signature Date