

**Leibniz ScienceCampus “Eastern Europe – Global Area” (EEGA)**

**Summer School for Academics and Journalists**

**“Populism in European Societies – Repercussions in the Media”**

**September 22–25, 2019**

**Call for Papers / Posters**

**Deadline: August 2, 2019**

The programme of the second international Summer School with journalists organised by the Leibniz ScienceCampus “Eastern Europe – Global Area” (EEGA) includes presentations, workshops, mutual coachings, lectures and discussions with prominent guests. The experimental exchange, moderated by freelance journalist Gemma Pörzgen, combines academic contributions with practical collaboration. Young academics are made aware of the tasks and working conditions of media professionals and, in return, enrich journalistic texts and topics with expert knowledge. In addition, various lectures will provide an insight into new media formats and suitable presentation forms and strategies. The aim of the Summer School is to establish networks and contacts between academics and media professionals in order to establish a long-term platform for cyclical transfer.

*Abstract*

The increasing attractiveness of populist movements is a phenomenon to be observed worldwide. Experiences of difference, fears of alienation and general uncertainty in a constantly changing world are playing an increasingly important role in Europe as well. Islamophobia and right-wing populism, for instance, as shown in the recently published EEGA special issue “Understanding and Explaining Islamophobia in Eastern Europe” (ed. Alexander Yendell, 2018), is also widespread where very few Muslims live and where the population knows Islam and Muslims usually only through the media. The philosopher Frank Schweizer addressed this problem in his article “The Decision Helpers” (<http://sz.de/1.4328143>) and discussed what this means for the position of academics in today’s public. In a time of constant change, full of new challenges, many people would like to see more solutions from the academic world, ideally presented with “one voice”, according to Schweizer. The complexity of problems and the abundance of information made a differentiated social discussion difficult. Journalism, in particular academic journalism, would play a major role in its mediating and translating function.

The social topicality of the challenges posed by populist movements and authoritarian regimes is also reflected in the research landscape. The transnational Research Institute for Social Cohesion, in the planning of which the University of Leipzig is involved, is symptomatic of this trend. New research projects and networks are being set up in various locations to investigate the conditions under which populist movements, parties and regimes emerge and change depending on certain contexts. The global networking of such actors and their resounding success with parts of the respective national populations is also being examined. However, this issue also affects the work of the media, including journalists, particularly when journalistic investigations and forms of representation are being distrusted, while hateful comments and insults become prevalent in the debates.

In the article “For an Alliance between Journalists and Researchers” (<https://de.ejo-online.eu/qualitaet-ethik/fuer-mehr-zusammenarbeit-zwischen-journalismus-und-wissenschaft>), the Swiss media scholar Stephan Russ-Mohl therefore called for an alliance of purpose, an “Alliance of Enlightenment”, in order to counteract disinformation together. In his opinion, this special-purpose alliance could result in a “win-win situation”: under certain conditions, the media could improve the quality of reporting, while academics could gain more public attention for their work.

Russ-Mohl, however, considers the actual chances of success of such collaborations to be slim. The author fears that the inherent dynamics of journalism on the one hand and academia on the other could even further reduce potential intersections, even though both asked similar questions: how are populism and related phenomena such as extremism, islamophobia, and xenophobia received by the population? What role do the media play in this context? How can diversity of opinion, plurality and social cohesion be maintained under the conditions of an internationally networking and rapidly changing society?

The ScienceCampus EEGA organises a Summer School in Leipzig from September 22 to 25, 2019 to discuss how these highly relevant questions can be transferred into the public debate, especially with regard to Eastern Europe and its global interdependence. How can academics and journalists deal with simplifications, misinformation, hate comments and insults in the discussion forums? During the four-day symposium, young academics and journalists will discuss topics such as:

- How can the “self-reinforcing process” of “ever the same” academics in the media (Frank Schweizer) be overcome?
- Which new research results on populist movements and regimes are available and how can these be taken up in journalistic work?
- How should “fake news” be dealt with and what counter-strategies are called for?
- Is an alliance of journalists and academics (Russ-Mohl) possible?
- What are the new challenges posed by populist trends and the simplification of politics?

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The Summer School is organised by the Leibniz ScienceCampus “Eastern Europe – Global Area” (EEGA). It is both an academic platform and a cooperative research network focussing on the development of new research perspectives for the changing role of Eastern Europe in current and historical processes of globalisation (<http://www.leibniz-eeqa.de>).

EEGA regularly organises summer schools for academics in dialogue with media representatives.

The four-day event is moderated by the freelance journalist Gemma Pörzgen.

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The EEGA invites academics, especially at PhD and postdoc level, to submit **abstracts** (max. 350 words + CV) for **paper and poster presentations** on the above and related issues.

Applications can be submitted until **August 2, 2019** via e-mail to [leibniz-eeqa@ifl-leipzig.de](mailto:leibniz-eeqa@ifl-leipzig.de)