

# Mapping Media for Future Democracies

Grant Agreement number: 101094984

DELIVERABLE 5.3

**Methodological protocol for ethnographic research**

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## Document Information

<b>Project</b>	
<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
<b>Document</b>	
<i>Work package no.</i>	WP. 5
<i>Work package title</i>	The demand side
<i>Work package lead beneficiary</i>	P3-IULM
<i>Task(s)</i>	5.3
<i>Deliverable no.</i>	5.3
<i>Deliverable title</i>	D5.3- Methodological protocol for ethnographic research
<i>Deliverable type</i>	OTHER
<i>Contractual date of deliverable</i>	June 2024
<i>Actual date of deliverable</i>	May 2024
<i>Editor(s)</i>	/
<i>Author(s)</i>	Andrea Miconi (IULM), Giulia Ferri (IULM), Elisabetta Risi (IULM), Nello Barile (IULM), Panos Kompatsiaris (IULM)
<i>Reviewer(s)</i>	Nico Carpentier, Josef Seethaler
<i>Version</i>	1.0
<i>Status</i>	Final
<i>Total number of pages (including cover)</i>	40
<i>Dissemination level</i>	PU

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## Introduction

This Methodological Protocol aims to provide a standard framework for the procedures to be adopted by the ten partners of MeDeMAP for the qualitative research on demand side (WP.5 - Task 5.3). The proposed procedures are designed to support cross-country coordination and the efficient implementation of data collection and subsequent analysis.

The methodological protocol is part of Work Package 5, which focuses on four main Task: (5.1) A map of audience evolution in the European Union, (5.2) Assessing trust in media and democratic institutions in Europe, (5.3) Ethnographic inquiry on media practices in ten European countries and (5.4) Multidimensional clustering: People, media, and democracy. **The following methodological protocol refers exclusively to Task 5.3, i.e. the qualitative study.**

In the original MeDeMAP project proposal, WP.5 aims to comprehend (p. 13):

- 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 ideas are composed;
- How the members of the groups can be described in terms of socio-demographic characteristics;

These goals refer to all the tasks of WP.5, i.e. both the qualitative and quantitative techniques that compose the Demand side. In this protocol it has been necessary to critically adapt and review these goals, considering only the qualitative component for Task 5.3, i.e. the ethnographic inquiry on media practices in ten European countries, focus of this methodological protocol.

As a matter of fact, the main contribution of the qualitative study is to offer a more detailed and personal perspective of people's feelings, ideas and experiences with regard to democracy and the role of the media within it, thus offering a more subjective view than just the statistical data from the previous tasks. As stated in the MeDeMAP project guidelines, Task 5.3 should be based on (p.34):

"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"

Moreover, the original project stresses that the qualitative study, designed to understand people's expectations and needs regarding the relationship between media and democracy, focus also on other topics, such as (p. 14):

"The level of participation, trust in media and institutions, and social agency and political participation will be considered as main research themes. The aim is therefore 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"

However, these preliminary statements had a series of weaknesses and problems that required a thorough review by IULM team in order to ensure the qualitative study success. Firstly, it is necessary to bear in mind the challenge inherent in organising a qualitative study in ten countries by as many different research teams (Livingstone, 2012; Martinus & Hedgcock, 2015). Balancing the autonomy of each partner with shared guidelines is one of the most critical aspects, especially considering the rather narrow literature on in this field (Wendt, 2020). Usually, when it comes to large-scale cross-country research, there is the preference for quantitative approaches, using surveys and statistical analyses. These techniques offer several benefits, including their usability in research contexts with few resources/time, less risk of interpretive biases, ethnocentrism and analytical divergences (Esser & Vliegthart, 2018).

To prevent these methodological problems, at the core of a qualitative methodological protocol there should be a regular collaboration between the teams. Although it may seem quite obvious, regular and rigorous dialogue between all partners is a key element in order to successfully overcome misunderstandings and methodological drifts. Collaboration implies mediation between the social, cultural and academic backgrounds of the researchers. Indeed, it is worth to mention that "academic life and the academic profession are not only composed of disciplinary differences (Whitley, 1984; Becher and Trowler, 1989; Henkel, 2000), but also of different academic cultural styles, research ethics, practices of conducting research and promoting young researchers, etc. in different countries and regions" (Kosmützky, 2018: 19). In order to avoid interpretative discrepancies, researchers need to be able to mediate not only with interviewees, but also with each other.

Furthermore, collaboration and communication between teams ensures consistency and mutual understanding in the development of the research, both during and after data collection. On the other hand, having specific teams for each national context consolidates linguistic and cultural continuity in cross-country data collection, reducing biases and guaranteeing communicative and interpretative coherence.

From a practical point of view, the limited time and complexity of coordinating ten different countries made it necessary to adapt the ethnographic approach, relying exclusively on two research techniques: semi-structured interviews and focus groups. In order to ensure a consistent data collection as well as a successful data analysis, according to the limited time and resources allocated, it was necessary to avoid a traditional field observation approach. Interviews and focus groups, nevertheless, allow to bring out personal perspectives deepening the aggregated data and offering people the opportunity to share ideas, feelings and experiences, thus contributing to the comprehension of how people create their social meanings.

These strategies provide a margin of autonomy to the teams, both in terms of allocated resources (Table 1) as well as in terms of data collection approaches, adapting the questions and the approach to the study topics according to their contextual needs.

**Table 1. Overview interviews and focus groups for each team**

TEAM	Focus groups	Interviews
OEAW	4	/
CU	4	/
IULM	4	40
JU	4	/
COMMIT	4	/
Lusofona Uni	4	10
TLU	4	10
IMT	4	10
MIC	5	/
MI	4	/
Germany	3	/
TOTAL	44	70

Another critical issue was the thematic dimension of Task 5.3. As already mentioned, in the first proposal of the qualitative study, a wide range of topics was proposed to be explored, from political participation to trust in the media and people's media habits. With such a broad research perspective, it was necessary to reflect on the operationalisation of the topics, trying to more clearly define the goals and research questions of the qualitative study.

To this end, WP.5's insights were filtered through the theoretical framework provided by WP.2/D2.1, in order to better articulate the specific goals of the qualitative task, namely:

**RQ1:** What are people's idea of democracy? (where it applies)

**RQ2:** What are the connection between democracy and media? (Have media a role in democracy?)

**RQ3:** How do people perceive their (political) participation in democracy?

**RQ4:** What role do the media play in people's democratic (participatory) practices?

Still following the discursive material approach of D2.1, the research topics (Table 2) were operationalized in order to address democracy and media issues, not only in terms of people's ideas, opinions and expectations, but also on their performative and participatory practices, i.e. people's democratic and media agency.

**Table 2. Thematic structure**

Theme	Core elements	Topics	Goal
Democracy	Political attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Idea of democracy;</li> <li>• Opinion about its national democracy (issues, threats, struggles etc.);</li> <li>• Trust in democracy (if it is a general feeling or it is related to specific institutions, specific aspects or problems);</li> </ul>	Based on people's idea of democracy, to understand how their attitudes towards the national democratic context is shaped.
	(Political) participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What forms of (political) participation do people recognise and practise in democracy;</li> <li>• What obstacles there are and what could or should change.</li> </ul>	To understand how people's (political) participation in democracy is perceived, where it applies and why.
Media's role in democracy	Attitudes towards media's role in democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Role and responsibilities of the media in democracy;</li> <li>• Opinion about its national media's work in democracy (issues, threats, struggles etc.);</li> <li>• Media trust;</li> </ul>	Based on citizens' expectations on media's role in democracy, to understand how this is perceived in each national context, in terms of citizens' opinion and trust in media democratic work.
	Media use and participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People's (political) media diet;</li> <li>• Forms of (political) participation through the media</li> </ul>	To start from people's media habits, understand how people perceive the role of the media in their (political) participation in democracy

Another aspect that should be pointed out is the target group of people who will participate in the study. In the project guidelines, there is no specific reference to any particular group of people, but rather a general interest in all segments of the society. For logistical reasons, it was decided to exclude minors from the study, taking into consideration only people from 18 years onwards.

As a qualitative research, participants sample is not representative of the whole society, but of personal perspectives on these issues, which are useful in understanding people's motivations and needs. The sample will be as large as possible, with an equal gender balance and heterogeneous socio-demographic characteristics.

Moreover, special attention should be granted to gender differences and the perspective of disadvantaged groups. The definition within which teams should operate when recruiting disadvantaged people follows the guidelines of the European Institute for Gender Equality<sup>1</sup>:

*"Groups of people who are at greater risk of poverty, social exclusion, discrimination and violence than the general population, including but not limited to ethnic minorities, migrants, people with disabilities, isolated elderly people and children".*

This definition does not provide a detailed description of the categories of disadvantaged groups - only a few examples are mentioned, such as migrants or ethnic minorities, but obviously there may be many other categories (e.g. language, gender, income). As stated in the adopted definition, the goal is to include in the study sample "those who, compared to the general population, are subject to social exclusion, discrimination and violence". As each country and national context will have different issues and disadvantaged groups, the decision to adopt such a general definition is precisely designed to not limit the target group, leaving each team to decide autonomously which disadvantaged people to include. Furthermore, not defining a disadvantaged group too narrowly is in line with the structure of qualitative research, which relies on individual instances that are not statistically significant, but personal and unique, and which aims to bring out the individuality of people, their feelings, experiences and ideas.

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<sup>1</sup> "Glossary and thesaurus", European Institute for Gender Equality. [https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1174?language\\_content\\_entity=en](https://eige.europa.eu/publications-resources/thesaurus/terms/1174?language_content_entity=en);

## Part 1: Data Collection

### 1. Recruitment

Each team will be responsible for recruiting interviewees and/or focus group participants. It is up to each team to decide whether or not to involve an external agency. However, there are a few points that all teams need to follow, regardless of how they reach out to participants:

- People recruited for the interviews must be different from those who will participate in the focus groups;
- In order to better support the recruitment and the collection of participant demographic data, IULM team developed questionnaire templates for both interviews and focus groups. Teams are kindly invited to carefully follow the instructions in the next sections regarding the use and modifications that can be made to the questionnaires.

If there are problems during the recruitment process, please contact IULM team for assistance.

#### 1.1 Interviews Sample

The general project guidelines for WP.5 do not define a fixed group of participants, so the interviews will include a large heterogeneous group of people, from 18 years onwards. Teams are thus encouraged to recruit different socio-demographic profiles (for example in terms of gender, age, education, political interest and orientation).

To help recruit people, and to have the widest possible sample, IULM team designed a questionnaire that partners are invited to use. It consists of socio-demographic questions - which can be expanded by individual teams according to their needs - and a series of questions on political interest (high and low). With respect to this last point, it was necessary to create a standardised measurement scale among all teams in order to avoid different interpretations of high and low political interest. Therefore, some questions present a score, whose final sum makes it possible to measure the person's level of interest.

If the sum is between:

- Between 0 and 4 = low political interest,
- Between 5 and 8 = high political interest.

**Questions relating to political interest (5 to 9) may not be changed, deleted or extended.**

The questionnaire was designed to avoid excessive homogenisation in terms of both demographics (e.g. recruiting people of the same age), but also politically (thus avoiding interviewing only people who are disinterested or affiliated with one political current). How to balance the heterogeneity of the interviewees is up to each team.

Screening questionnaire for interviews recruitment (in red the questions on political interest)

1. Age:

- 18-24 y/o
- 25-35 y/o
- 36-44 y/o
- 45-54 y/o
- 55-65 y/o
- Over 65 y/o

2. Gender:

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

3. Education level:

- No title
- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- Degree or Master's degree
- Postgraduate
- Prefer not to say

4. Where do you live? .....

5. How interested are you in political news?

- Very interested [3]
- Fairly interested [2]
- Not very interested [1]
- Not interested at all [0]

6. How much time do you spend on average reading or watching political news on a typical day?

- Less than 10 minutes [0]
- 10-30 minutes [1]
- 30 minutes - 1 hour [2]
- More than 1 hour [3]

7. Have you participated in any political elections (e.g. voted) in the last 5 years?

- Yes [1]
- No [0]

8. Are you part of a political party, movement or organisation (like NGOs) ?

- Yes [1], please specify .....
- No [0]

9. Have you participated in demonstrations, protests, petitions or other political activities (including online) in the last 12 months?

- Yes [1]
- No [0]

10. How would you best describe your political views?

- Prefer not to say
- Extreme Left
- Left
- Slightly left
- Center
- Slightly right
- Right
- Extreme Right

After several discussions with all partners, it was also decided to use interviews to ensure a minimum coverage of people from disadvantaged groups. Although it is possible to include disadvantaged people also in the focus groups, in the interviews this is mandatory. Interviews are indeed more appropriate than focus groups to discuss with people who might experience difficult situations and social exclusion, by creating a safe space for their experiences to emerge. **Teams should interview at least 20% of the participants who fit the definition of the European Institute for Gender Equality.**

**Table 3. Minimal n. of persons from disadvantaged groups per team**

Team	N interviews	N people from disadvantages groups
IULM	40	8
Lusofona Uni	10	2
TLU	10	2
IMT	10	2

## 1.2 Focus Groups Sample

The composition of the focus groups should be functional to guarantee a successful discussion table in which all participants feel free to express themselves and have fruitful discussions on the subjects of the research. One of the strengths of focus groups is the opportunity to obtain data from a dynamic micro-context in which different individuals interact with each other, shaping and transforming their own perspectives in relation to others' (Cardano & Gariglio, 2022). Discussion is therefore a key element for a focus group and requires careful selection of participants to work. Therefore, people who know each other or have connections with the researchers will not be recruited. As participants will be strangers to each other, it is important to balance participants similarities and differences, in order for people to discuss different experiences and considerations without feeling isolated or in awe.

Considering also the pre-test results (p.13), groups will be structured according to two homogeneous criteria: **age and political interest**. The first data differentiates the focus groups into two age groups: 18-35 and  $\geq 36$ . At the same time, political interest allows this bipartition to be further divided into people with high political interest and people with low political interest (Table 4).

Within each group, specific socio-demographic characteristics will ensure internal heterogeneity among the participants. More precisely, each group should be balanced with respect to gender and educational level. Teams may then add further heterogeneity parameters to their focus groups, specific to their national context (e.g. language, city/rural areas etc..).

**Table 4. Focus groups composition**

<div style="text-align: center;">Political Interest</div> <div style="text-align: left;">Age</div>	High	Low
<b>18 - 35</b>	1° [people between 18-35 with high political interest]	2° [people between 18-35 with low political interest]
<b>≥ 36</b>	3° [people ≥ 36 with high political interest]	4° [people ≥ 36 with low political interest]

In order to measure people's political interest on equal terms in all participating teams, IULM team drew up a questionnaire, as for the interviews, that all partners are required to fill in to the people they recruit. The questionnaire includes questions on socio-demographic data (like age, gender, education and political orientation) which the teams can expand on, depending on their needs.

Questions 5 to 9, on the other hand, relate to people's political interest and **cannot be changed or expanded upon by individual teams**. These questions on political interest provide a score for each answer. The total sum of the answers will provide the political interest level index.

- Between 0 and 4 = low political interest,
- Between 5 and 8 = high political interest.

Screening questionnaire for focus groups recruitment (in red the questions on political interest)

1. Age:

- 18-24 y/o
- 25-35 y/o
- 36-44 y/o
- 45-54 y/o
- 55-65 y/o
- Over 65 y/o

2. Gender:

- Man
- Woman
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

3. Education level:

- No title
- Elementary school
- Middle school
- High school
- Degree or Master's degree
- Postgraduate
- Prefer not to say

4. Where do you live? .....

5. How interested are you in political news?

- Very interested [3]
- Fairly interested [2]
- Not very interested [1]
- Not interested at all [0]

6. How much time do you spend on average reading or watching political news on a typical day?

- Less than 10 minutes [0]
- 10-30 minutes [1]
- 30 minutes - 1 hour [2]
- More than 1 hour [3]

7. Have you participated in any political elections (e.g. voted) in the last 5 years?

- Yes [1]
- No [0]

8. Are you part of a political party, movement or organisation (like NGOs) ?

- Yes [1], please specify .....
- No [0]

9. Have you participated in demonstrations, protests, petitions or other political activities (including online) in the last 12 months?

- Yes [1]
- No [0]

10. How would you best describe your political views?

- Prefer not to say
- Extreme Left
- Left
- Slightly left
- Center
- Slightly right
- Right
- Extreme Right

## 2. Pre test

Several pre-tests, in the form of interviews and focus groups, have been conducted over the last few months to verify the methodological proposal and improved critical aspects. The pre-tests were conducted by IULM and Lusofona teams.

Among the many points of discussion, the composition of the focus groups and the distribution of research topics were the central issues during the working months. With regard to the first point, the composition of the focus groups, pre-tests were carried out both with completely heterogeneous groups and with homogeneous groups according to specific criteria - such as age and political interest.

Heterogeneous focus groups included people not only with different demographic characteristics but also with different political interests. In IULM experience, people who were less interested in political issues found it more difficult to participate in discussions that were mainly led by strong, politically interested personalities. Another element that emerged was related to people's age, or rather their generational experience. During the focus group, older participants (over 50 years old) found it difficult to interact and participate in discussions led by younger participants (20-30 years old), despite their similarity in terms of political interest.

In the second focus group, however, two homogeneity variables were used: age ( $\geq 36$ ) and political interest (high). In this case, the group proved to be much more cohesive, with all participants regularly taking part in the discussions. There were no 'limits' to participation, although it was natural for some participants to be more influential than others. It should be noted, however, that in this case there was much less disagreement; in general, participants discussions reinforced each other's assumptions, but generally arrive to the same conclusion.

Based on pre-tests inputs, IULM team decided - in agreement with the other partners - to proceed with an internally homogeneous composition of the focus groups according to two parameters: age and political interest.

On the second issue - topic imbalance - in an iterative process of steady revision of the results, the structure of the interviews and focus groups had to be gradually revised in order to better focus the discussion on the link between media and democracy while preventing too much focus on single sections, such as media use or political trust.

### 3. Technical and Thematic Proposal

As previously mentioned, the thematic structure of the qualitative study relied on both the original proposal of the MeDeMAP project and the theoretical notes of D2.1 (Table 2, p.7). Due to the complexity and quantity of topics to be dealt with, in the next pages it will be provided examples of interviews and focus groups to help the researchers during data collection. **Please note that these examples are suggestions that can be adapted by each team according to their own needs.**

#### 3.1 Focus Groups structure

##### Technical notes

- a. Each group should consist of eight participants. It is always good to recruit two more people, in case someone does not show up;
- b. Each focus group last no longer than 120 minutes;
- c. Following the principle proposed by Morgan (1996), focus groups will be composed of individuals who are strangers to each other, thus avoiding pre-existing power dynamics between people who already know each other;
- d. The general structure of the focus groups will be written in English. Each team is responsible for translating the structures into their local language, ensuring coverage of the survey topics and variables;
- e. Moderators may change the order of topics, spend more time on some issues than others and add more points of discussion. The aim is not to follow the guidelines to the letter, but rather to ensure that the essential points of the research are discussed among the participants;
- f. The focus groups will be conducted in person;
- g. The focus groups, with the consent of the participants, will be audio/video-recorded. The recordings may only be viewed by the research teams and the material should only be shared on servers chosen by the consortium members;
- h. All participants name will be anonymized in the transcripts, as well as any personal data;
- i. It would be useful to have two researchers for each focus group, one to facilitate the discussion and one to observe the discussion and take notes of contextual information - such as body language or power and psychological dynamics between participants. Considering the different resources available to each team, this option is not mandatory but is strongly recommended;
- j. The approximate data collection period is from **May 2024 to September 2024**;

All teams will have a reference structure, but will be able to make changes and adapt the work plan according to their needs. **(The following are not "questions", but just a list of topics that the participants have to discuss together)**. In the proposal we have included interactive activities to stimulate discussion. These activities are a supplement that you can draw on if you find it useful for the discussion, and are therefore not compulsory.

Interviews and focus groups can not be over-structured, but IULM team does recommend the following. Please, focus on people's attitude, and even biographical experiences about the state of democracy, and filter the media-related questions through the filter of media-democracy connection. At that point, people will inevitably talk – directly or indirectly – about their media repertoires, and hopefully it will be possible to isolate that part at the stage of the analysis.

### **Focus group proposal**

#### **Introduction and Warm-up question**

- Can each of you briefly introduce yourself and choose an adjective to describe yourself? If you could describe yourself in one word, what would you say?

#### **1/ Political attitudes**

- What is democracy for you?
- How is democracy in your country doing? Why? Where is it working and where not?
- How much trust do you have in your democracy? In politics? In other parts of society?

#### **2/ (Political) participation**

- How much should people participate in democracy? In what way? In politics? In other parts of society?
- What could hinder people's participation in democracy? Conversely: How could it be promoted?

#### **3/ Attitudes towards media's role in democracy**

- How do you think media can contribute to a functioning democracy?
- Do media always play these roles well? What is hampering them from supporting democracy? Which media work better, are there any differences?
- Do you trust what media publish? Why? Which media are most reliable for you?

#### **4/ Media use and participation**

- Where do you usually get your (political) news? Do you agree with what media show you? How and why?
- How much influence do the media have on people participation in democracy? Why? [If yes, how? Which media in particular?]
- How can you participate in democracy through media? Which media work better?

#### **Wrap – up and Conclusion**

- Recap the points of the discussion and ask if they want to add something;

## Projective exercises

Here are some examples of projective and interactive exercises that can help moderators to lead the discussions. These exercises are not mandatory, but are intended to be a suggestion for your focus groups. Please notice that IULM team simply list out some tricks of the trade (quoting Howard Becker) in case of need – for instance, if the conversation is not fluid as it is expected to be.

### Introduction and warm up questions

In order to start the discussion, it would be better to use simple interactive exercises that allow people to feel comfortable. It is possible to ask for personal information, as stated in the proposal (e.g. asking to describe themselves, their hobbies) Or, you can introduce participants to the research topics, e.g: How do you feel about media? How do you feel about democracy?

Let them answer with one word/adjective for each of these questions. You can write down the answers on a blackboard, in order to have an element that will help subsequent discussions.

### 1/ Political attitudes

- Fake scenario: Ask participants to identify themselves in an imaginary situation in order to describe their idea of democracy. Example: "If some aliens came to Earth and asked us to explain to them what a democracy is, what would you say?"  
You can also conduct this activity by dividing the participants into mini-groups for discussion. Each group thinks of a possible definition of democracy and writes it on a post-it (or states it verbally and the moderators write it on the board). Once the answers have been collected, the discussion can begin, trying to understand any similarities or discrepancies in the definitions.
- Complete the sentence: Ask people to complete sentences such as: 'I would have more trust in democracy if....!'. People can write their answer on a post-it note, or it can be written directly by a moderator on the blackboard.

### 2/ (Political) participation

- Free association: Ask participants what actions come to their mind when thinking about (political) participation in democracy. To make the activity more interactive, give a maximum of 3 minutes to share any words, thoughts, actions that come to participants' minds. A moderator will write them down on a blackboard, so that you have a starting point to discussing the topic.

### 3/ Attitudes towards media's role in democracy

- Extremes argument: In order to start discussing the role of the media in democracy, people can be asked to think of an activity that the media should perform to help democracy to the maximum and an activity that significantly undermines the stability of democracy instead.
- Anonymous answers: Ask participants to write down on a post-it note what they are dissatisfied with about the work of the media. To make the discussion more interactive, collect the post-its and redistribute them randomly. Then each participant gives his or her opinion on what was written in the post it received.

### 3.2. Interviews structure

#### Technical notes

- a. Interviews (n. 70) will take place in 4 countries: Italy, Estonia, Portugal and France;

Team	N interviews
IULM	40
Lusofona Uni	10
TLU	10
IMT	10

- b. Interviews should last one hour;
- c. The model interviews will be written in English. Each team will be responsible for translating the structures into their local language to ensure coverage of the topics and survey variables;
- d. Interviewers may change the order of questions, spend more time on some topics than others and add additional questions. The aim is not to follow the interview guide to the letter, but rather to discuss the main topics of the research;
- e. Interviews can be either face-to-face, call or online (via Zoom, Teams, Meet). These options should be specified prior to the meeting, to ensure that interviewees can choose the best option for them; the structure of the interviews, whether online or face-to-face, will be the same;
- f. In-person interviews will take place in locations agreed upon between the interviewee and the researcher, so as to meet the needs of the former;
- g. Interviews will be video or audiotaped with the consent of the participants. The recordings will only be viewed by the research teams and the material should only be shared on servers chosen by the consortium members.
- h. All names of participants in interviews and surveys will be anonymized in the transcripts as well as any personal data;
- i. The approximate data collection period is from **May 2024 to September 2024**.

## Interview proposal

### Warm up questions

- Introduction and icebreaker questions;

### 1/ Political attitudes

- If you would have to describe to a class of students what democracy is, how would you describe it [In other words: What is democracy for you?]
- How do you perceive democracy in your country? Do you feel satisfied? Why?
- Are there any challenges and problems are you concerned with? Which one? Why?
- Do you trust the democratic system in your country? Why? [Follow- up: Who do you trust? In political institutions? And in others? Has your trust changed over the years? If yes, how?]

### 2/ (Political) Participation

- If you have to think to people participation in democracy, what actions comes to your mind? [In other words: How can people participate in democracy?]
- Did you/ were you tempted to take part of any of these actions? Why? Do you have the impression that you can make a difference with your actions? [If little or none action, let's ask: What is your opinion of the people who do take such action? What impact would make in democracy?]
- What might discourage people's participation in democracy? [Follow up: Conversely, how could people's participation be promoted?]

### 3/ Attitudes towards media's role in democracy

- In your opinion, what role and responsibility do the media have in democracy?
- How do you perceive the role and work of the media in your democracy? Why? [if they are not satisfied, investigate what do they think inhibits the media from supporting democracy]
- Which media do you trust the most? Why? [Follow-up: Do you perceive any differences, in terms of trustworthiness, between the news you find online and those you find on TV, radio or in newspapers?]

### 4/ Media use and participation

- When it comes to political news, where do you get your information? Do you use the media you told me you trust? If not, why? [Follow up: Would you say that your use of media has changed over the years? If yes, how?]
- Do you agree with what the media show you? [Follow-up: On what other issues should the media focus? Why?]
- Do you think people can use the media to participate and be heard in democracy? How and why? Which media would work better?

### Conclusion:

- Is there anything else you would like to add?

## Part 2: Data Analysis

The analysis of the qualitative research data will be carried out in two stages: first, each research team will be asked to write a country report, sharing the raw data of the qualitative study as well as methodological and contextual information [D5.4]. Then, considering the country reports from each partner, IULM team will carry out an inductive analysis of the data collected by each partner.

The decision to centralise the data analysis is driven both by the limited resources of each team in terms of staff and time allocated, and by the challenges in managing and coordinating an analysis across 10 different research teams. However, centralising data analysis can also pose risks, such as language and cultural gaps and ethnocentric biases. To overcome these challenges, it will be crucial, during the analysis, to have regular dialogue between IULM team and the other partners to ensure a consistent and shared interpretation of the data.

According to the guidelines of the MeDeMAP project, the results of the qualitative study will lead to a report, drafted by the IULM team, which will provide transnational conclusions on people's needs, desires and expectations towards the media-democracy nexus [D5.5].

### 4. Country report

Country reports are a key tool for analysing qualitative data from cross-national studies such as MeDeMAP, thus supporting researchers in understanding the data within a more holistic framework. For this reason, and to help IULM team as much as possible in the interpretation of the data, country reports will be thought as country folders (.zip), in which each team reports the following elements:

- a) Full transcripts of interviews and/or focus groups, in the original language (.txt);
- b) Translated transcripts into English (.docx);
- c) Methodological notes (.docx);
- d) Contextual notes (.docx);

#### • Transcripts:

Interviews and focus groups should be transcribed verbatim in the original language, in .txt format, as required by the MeDeMAP guidelines (p. 16). Each interview/focus group should be transcribed in a distinct .txt file. If there are parts that are unclear or cannot be transcribed, mark them as follows (**unclear**).

The transcripts should then be translated into English. Each team translates the focus groups/interviews according to its own preference. You can then rely on automated software if necessary. The decision here is up to each team. Again, each translated interview/focus group will be saved in a distinct file. In this case, the format is .docx, in order to preserve the template required for possible notes along the translated transcript, if there are linguistic, cultural or contextual aspects important for understanding participants' and interviewees' answers.

On the top of each transcript (both original and translated), please be sure to always mention the interview/focus group number. This will make it easier to locate the original transcripts if needed.

As stated in D1.2 – Data Management Plan (p.13), in the transcripts (both in the original language as in English) the names of the participants will be replaced by pseudonyms such as person A, person B, person C etc., and other obviously identifying information will be removed.

It is also important to remember that sometimes there are sensitive data that cannot simply be removed, otherwise they would compromise the comprehension of the sentence. In this case, the most appropriate choice is to mask, by anonymous, generic paraphrase, the important aspect of the sentence containing this sensitive information. In this case, the paraphrase of the original data can be indicated with two brackets [...]. This aspect is very delicate and particularly complex, therefore, IULM team can assist partners who will need to anonymise data, guaranteeing an accurate control of the required standards.

Here are two examples of transcripts we recommend, the first for interviews and the second for focus groups. Each group can however adapt the template to its own needs. However, it is important that the identification number of the interview/focus group are included.

<b>Interview N: 1</b>	
<p><b>TEAM:</b> IULM</p> <p><b>Person A</b></p> <p><b>Age:</b> 25-35</p> <p><b>Genre:</b> M</p>	
Transcripts	Notes
<p><b>Q:</b> And from this point of view, what should be the role of the media in your opinion?</p> <p><b>Person A:</b> In theory, the first step should be to tell the truth and bring it into people's homes. It should still be as truthful as possible, so that the person can make up his own mind, which we are no longer inclined to do. My grandfather, for example, had the TV news as his mainstay. There was a need to know what had happened in the world. Now, on the other hand, there are the 24-hour news channels, you are bombarded all the time. And so the news is seen with more superficiality. Before, the news was an event. Today, there is no longer a division between the news. The TV news programme that my grandfather used to watch was structured differently: there were news reports, political news, foreign news... then little by little the <b>'studio aperto'</b> news came out... but there was no such frivolous news at the TV news one day. Those who wanted them bought <b>Panorama, TV sorrisi e canzoni</b>.</p>	<p><b>Studio aperto:</b> Private Mediaset channel's news programme. The interviewee in this case talks about it by referring to the entertainment news, which the news programme is characterised by.</p> <p><b>Panorama:</b> weekly news magazine.</p> <p><b>Tv sorrisi e canzoni</b> is instead a gossip magazine.</p>

## Focus Group N: 1

**TEAM:** IULM

Participant	Genre	Age (if you have it)
Participant A	Woman	24
Participant B	Woman	55
Participant C	Man	55
Participant D	Man	35
Participant E	Man	24

Transcripts	Notes
<p><b>Moderator:</b> Does the fact that on the Internet and social media, potentially anyone can post a news story have an impact? Or are there other aspects/problems?</p> <p><b>Participant D (M, 35):</b> In my opinion, the problem is more related to the lack of consequences. If journalists report fake news, they have no repercussions whatsoever...</p> <p><b>Participant E (M, 24):</b> But in a democracy, information must be free. In my opinion, if you put consequences on the work of journalists, you make it worse. If we have the real news it's precisely because there is no control.</p> <p><b>Participant D (M, 35):</b> Yes, but there is a deontology to follow, at least theoretically. <b>Odg</b> should exist for that.</p> <p><b>Participant E (M, 24):</b> In my opinion it's not fair that there should be a supreme authority of the news, there should be a free market of news and we, as audience, with the tools at our disposal should know how to move in it.</p> <p><b>Participant D (M, 35):</b> Yes, but since an order and a deontology exist, among other things precisely to protect certain things, we should respect these regulations. In Italy this already exists on paper, but not in practice.</p>	<p>Participant C (M, 55) nodd</p> <p><b>Odg:</b> Ordine dei Giornalisti is a public institution that administrate, from 1963, the Italian Journalists' Register (Albo dei giornalisti), whose registration is mandatory in order to work as a journalist in Italy.</p> <p>The discussion between Participant E (M,24) and Participant D (M,35) is very heated, high tones, irritability on both sides. The other participants do not try to intervene.</p>

- **Methodological notes**

Country reports are also an important tool to gather technical information on how activities were carried out and to address problems, doubts and critical issues that arose. For this purpose, it is important to have both methodological notes for each interview/focus group as well as more general methodological notes that provide an overview of the focus groups/interviews conducted. Below are four different templates to fill in.

**Methodological notes for each focus group:**

It must be filled in for each focus group you perform. It is strongly suggested to carry it out during the debriefing stage of the activity, without leaving too much time to pass. Please save each methodological note in a separate .docx file.

Information concerning each focus group	
Team	
Country	
Focus group n*	
Group	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-35; High political interest <input type="checkbox"/> 18-35; Low political interest <input type="checkbox"/> ≥36; High political interest <input type="checkbox"/> ≥36; Low political interest
Moderator 1	
Moderator 2 (if any)	
Date	
Location	
Participant's demographic data	
Further remarks	
What did you observed that wouldn't be evident from reading the transcripts? (group dynamics, feelings...)	
What are the main themes that emerged in this focus group?	
What problem did you encounter? (logistical, participants behavior, confusing or difficult questions)	
Addictional elements to report	

### Methodological notes for each interview:

It must be filled in for each interview you perform. It is strongly suggested to carry it out during the debriefing stage of the activity, without leaving too much time to pass. Please save each methodological note in a separate .docx file.

Information concerning each interview	
Team	
Country	
Interview n*	
Interviewer	
Date	
Location (telephone, online, in presence)	
Interviewee demographic data	
Further remarks	
What did you observed that wouldn't be evident from reading the transcripts?	
What are the main themes that emerged in this interview?	
What problem did you encounter? (logistical, interviewee behavior, confusing or difficult questions)	
Addictional elements to report	

## General methodological note focus group:

It only has to be filled out once, at the end of all the focus groups you have held. The required data are meant as a general evaluation of all focus groups performed. Please save this methodological note in a separate .docx file.

General Methodological Notes Focus groups	
Team	
Country	
Total number focus groups	
Time period	
Locations (Please explain your choice)	
Recruitments (Please specify how you recruited participants; if you considered any contextual criteria in your choice of interviewees and participants (e.g. linguistic aspect, or origin from rural/urban areas) and if so, justify your choice	
Review of activities carried out (possible differences in the quality of the focus groups, recurring problems)	
Addictional elements to report	

## General Methodological notes interviews:

It only has to be filled out once, at the end of all the interviews you have held. The required data are meant as a general evaluation of all the interviews performed. Please save this methodological note in a separate .docx file.

General Methodological Notes Interviews	
Team	
Country	
Total number Interviews	
Time period	
Locations (Please explain your choice)	
Recruitments (Please specify how you recruited participants; if you considered any contextual criteria in your choice of interviewees and participants (e.g. linguistic aspect, or origin from rural/urban areas) and if so, justify your choice, if there were any problems with recruitment)	
Review of activities carried out (possible differences in the quality of the interviews, recurring problems)	
Addictional elements to report	

- **Contextual notes**

As a qualitative study, the socio-political context is a key aspect for the comprehension of the data collected. For this reason, each team will be asked to write a brief description of the current political and media context of their country. Here again, we propose a template for you to fill in. Please save this contextual note in a separate .docx file.

Contextual notes	
Team	
Country	
Current political situation of the country (government, recent elections or upcoming elections, predominant political currents, possible political crises to take into account);	
Specific cultural, religion and linguistic characteristics (autonomous communities, regional/linguistic minorities);	
Traditional and digital information landscape (overview of the main public broadcasters, national newspapers, public/private media, degree of politicisation of traditional media);	
Any other information related to the national political/social/media landscape that, from your point of view, may be useful for the analysis.	

## 5. IULM Analysis

Once all partners deliver their country reports, IULM's team will start analysing the raw data, using MAXQDA software if necessary. The aim will be to provide general reflections on the research themes at a European level, thus answering:

**RQ1:** What are people's idea of democracy? (where it applies).

**RQ2:** What are the connection between democracy and media? (Have media a role in democracy?)

**RQ3:** How do people perceive their (political) participation in democracy?

**RQ4:** What role do the media play in people's democratic (participatory) practices?

Due to the structural design of Task 5.3, including its goal to move from individual country scenarios to more general and abstract considerations, an inductive analytical approach may be the most appropriate choice for data analysis. The analysis will specifically follow Strauss and Corbin (1990) proposed model, which is based on three main steps:

- **Open coding:** Data are broken down into smaller units, in an iterative approach of data-code review. During this first phase, similar codes will be grouped under a broader label, thus setting off a gradual process of abstraction and saturation;
- **Axial coding:** Also referred to as the 'coding paradigm', in this stage connections between the categories are revealed, studying in depth the 'conditions, context, action/interaction strategies and consequences' to ensure the validity of the analytical process;
- **Selective coding:** From the categories that have been developed during the open and axial coding into a cohesive theory.

By gradually coding interviews and focus groups, it will be possible to further expand and update the codes, thus achieving thematic saturation and continue with the subsequent stages of categorisation and interpretation. In the coding and interpretation of the data, attention will be paid to the theoretical framework discussed in detail in D2.1, and upon which lies the design of the qualitative study as well as the research questions. This analysis approach will help to reveal patterns and themes driving people's ideas and expectations on media and democracy.

During the whole analysis process, IULM team adheres to several quality and reliability criteria. This implies regular comparative tests by IULM team, where different researchers code the data to compare and standardise the categories that emerge. In addition, researchers, both within the IULM team and with other partners, regularly discuss progress and problems in the analytical process and treat each country's data consistently, considering the challenges of cross-country research.

Several critical aspects had to be addressed when planning the data analysis to be carried out. Indeed, there is no doubt that the available time is very limited, especially due to the amount of data to be analysed. Furthermore, despite all the measures to minimise any linguistic and cultural bias, it is necessary to recognise the potential challenges to the interpretation of the data. In order to minimise these obstacles, our team considered it most appropriate to centralise the data analysis by the WP.5 team leader alone, while still keeping the analysis process under constant dialogue and monitoring by the other teams. To this end, IULM team should schedule regular follow-up meetings with the other teams in order to have regular feedback on the analysis status, improving and adapting the proposal if necessary.

## Data policy

The data collected will be managed according to both the **General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)** and the indications provided in Deliverable 1.2 - Data Management Plan.

Specifically, since the qualitative study involves the collection of sensitive data from participants, including the use of video/audio recordings, it is necessary to provide interviewees and focus group participants with:

- Informed consent to participate in the activities,
- Information on the protection and use of personal data (information note pursuant to art. 13 and 14 of EU Reg. 2016/679- GDPR)
- Consent declaration for the video/audio recording of the activity.

Due to the different recruitment choices made by each project partner, it is not possible to provide a generic format that is the same for all. The data protection office of the WP.5 team leader - IULM University - will provide each team with the documents previously mentioned, on the basis of the specific recruitment dynamics adopted by each team.

Each team is going to adopt translated versions in their local language, adapted according to the legal and bureaucratic requirements of their university and the chosen recruitment methods.

Below, only for reference purposes, we report the models that will be adopted by IULM team, which will proceed with the recruitment as follows:

- a. **Focus group:** collaboration with an external agency that will recruit participants and provide demographic data.
- b. **Interviews:** recruitment by the research team through snowball sampling.

## MeDeMaP PROJECT - Focus group

### INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

**Research Project:** Horizon Europe Research Project - Mapping Media for Future Democracies

**Team Leader:** Prof. Andrea Miconi

**Data collection managers:** Prof. Elisabetta Risi, Giulia Ferri

Dear participant,

**With the following form we would like to ask you to participate in the research project Mapping Media for Future Democracies (MeDeMAP).** Please read carefully the following information about the aims of the research and how it will be carried out before deciding whether or not to give your consent.

Please take the time to read the following information and do not hesitate to ask for clarification or further information.

#### **Aim of the research**

The MeDeMAP project, carried out in collaboration with ten European institutions, aims to understand the role and influence of the media in European democracies, particularly when it comes

to citizens' political participation. By combining different research techniques, the study aims to identify ways to strengthen democracies through more transparent and accountable media practices.

### **Activities**

The activity involves the use of a focus group, a research technique that brings together a small group of participants around a table to talk about one or more issues. The group is facilitated by two researchers. The whole activity takes about two hours.

### **Participation and withdrawal**

Participation in focus groups is voluntary. You have the right not to answer and/or not to continue with the research and to withdraw at any time.

At the end of the activity you will receive financial compensation in the form of an Amazon voucher worth EUR 30. If the number of people attending the activity exceeds the number required, our team reserves the right to dismiss one or more people before the activity starts, although they will still receive financial compensation in the form of an Amazon voucher worth €15.

### **Audio/Video Recording**

For the purposes of the study, the activity will be audio recorded. Audio and transcripts of the activity will be for the exclusive use of the research team, who will guarantee the complete confidentiality of the data collected.

Please contact Prof. Andrea Miconi ([andrea.miconi@iulm.com](mailto:andrea.miconi@iulm.com)), Prof. Elisabetta Risi ([Elisabetta.risi@iulm.com](mailto:Elisabetta.risi@iulm.com)), Giulia Ferri ([giulia.ferri@iulm.com](mailto:giulia.ferri@iulm.com)) for any further information or clarification.

## **CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

The undersigned \_\_\_\_\_ declares by signing the following form:

- That I have read the contents of this form and that I understand them;
- That I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received appropriate answers;
- That I understand that participation in this study involves information being collected by audio recording and transcription;
- That I give my consent to the processing of my personal data collected as part of this research in the manner and for the purposes described above;
- That I agree to take part in the research.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_

# MeDeMaP PROJECT - Focus group

Information note pursuant to art. 13 and 14 of EU Reg. 2016/679- GDPR

## 1. DATA PROCESSORS

**THE DATA CONTROLLER**, pursuant to Articles 4 and 24 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 is Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM located in Via Carlo Bo, 1 - 20143 Milan, represented by its pro-tempore legal representative.

In compliance with Articles 37-39 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the University has appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO) who can be contacted at the following email address: [dpo.iulm@dpoprofessionalservice.it](mailto:dpo.iulm@dpoprofessionalservice.it).

## 2. DATA PROCESSED AND SOURCES

IULM University will acquire some of your personal data (name, surname, age, gender, educational qualification, email address, telephone number) subject to your consent, from partners operating in the marketing sector, such as agencies for the recruitment of subjects for market.

During the Focus Group the Data Controller, with your consent, will be able to take photos and videos and thus process his voice and image taken, individually or in a group.

## 3. PURPOSES OF PROCESSING AND LAWFUL BASIS

Personal data, including of a particular nature, will be processed, in accordance with the conditions for lawful processing set out in article 6, paragraph 1, letter a) of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, for the following purpose:

Subject to Your consent and until its revocation, participation in the study and activities of the Scientific Research Project issued by the European Commission entitled “*Mapping Media for Future Democracies- MeDeMaP*” through participation in Focus Groups.

It is specified that the final results of this research will be disclosed anonymously and in an aggregate manner. It will therefore no longer be possible, following the outcome of the research, to trace the personal data, even particular ones, to a recognized and recognizable subject.

## 4. COMMUNICATION, TRANSFER AND DISSEMINATION OF PERSONAL DATA

The data collected will be processed by University researchers and researchers involved in the project, who act on the basis of specific instructions provided regarding the purposes and methods of the processing itself.

During the Focus Group, organized as part of the European research project called MeDeMaP, the participants' interventions will first be audio or video recorded and then transcribed and archived in text format. In this last phase, participants will be given pseudonyms in order to anonymize the data that will be disseminated. The video footage will be stored in the University's computer archives to which only the researchers involved in the Project will have access.

The data may be communicated to third parties belonging to the following categories:

- entities that provide services for the management of the information system and communication networks (including e-mail and web);
- competent authorities for the fulfilment of legal obligations and/or provisions of public bodies, at their request.

The subjects belonging to the above-mentioned categories will act as Data Processors, or they may operate independently as autonomous Data Controllers. The list of the Data Processors for each Controller is constantly updated and available at their respective offices and at the contacts indicated in point 1 of the policy.

Your personal data will not be transferred abroad except for possible revisions by the other partners of the Project. This transfer will in any case take place within the European Economic Area - EEA.

## **5. PROCESSING PROCEDURES AND DATA STORAGE**

The processing of personal data will be carried out using IT tools, adopting adequate technical and organizational measures to protect them from unauthorized or illicit access, destruction, loss of integrity and confidentiality, even accidental. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, the data will subsequently be deprived of directly identifying references (e.g. name and surname, etc.), so that they are no longer immediately attributable to the subject to whom they refer, and analyzed for the sole purpose of the implementation of the aforementioned project. Personal data will be kept for a maximum period of 5 years from the end of the project and subsequently destroyed.

## **6. NATURE OF THE CONFERMENT AND REFUSAL**

The provision of your personal data for the purposes referred to in paragraph 3 of this policy is optional. Any refusal to provide data will make it impossible for the Data Controller to use your image and your voice collected during the event for the intended purposes.

## **7. RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS**

You may exercise your rights in accordance with the provisions set out in articles 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, by contacting the Data Controller, or the Data Protection Officer under article.38 paragraph 4, by contacting the Personnel Department. You have the right at any time to ask the Data Controller for access to your personal data, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, as well as the portability of your data. Without prejudice to any other administrative or jurisdictional appeal, should you believe that the processing of your data violates the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, pursuant to article 15 letter f) of the aforementioned Regulation (EU) 2016/679, you have the right to make a complaint to the Guarantor for the protection of personal data and, with reference to article 6, paragraph 1, letter a) and article 9, paragraph 2, letter a), you have the right to revoke the consent given at any time. In the case of a request for data portability, the Data Controller will provide the personal data regarding the data subject from an automated device in a structured format which is legible and in common use, without prejudice to paragraphs 3 and 4 of article 20 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

**CONSENT TO THE PROCESSING OF IMAGES COLLECTED AT THE EVENT**

Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_  
declare to have read the Privacy Policy of IULM University regarding the processing of personal data  
(voice and images collected during the production of the arts documentary as part of the YAW  
scientific research project).

**and I express my consent**

to the processing of your voice and image (photos and videos) for scientific purposes as indicated in  
the information.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

# MeDeMaP PROJECT - Focus group

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned,..... (hereinafter, for the sake of clarity, also referred to as 'the recorded person"), born in ....., Province of....., on....., resident in ....., Post Code ....., Province of ....., street/number.....,TaxCode .....,

## AUTHORIZE

1. IULM University to carry out, by whatever means, filming of my image and/or recording of my voice, granting to the same the right, but not the obligation, to record, reproduce, disseminate, print, publish and project by any means currently known or that will be available in the future, in any form whatsoever, without limitation of time, throughout the world, even through total and/or partial transfer to third parties, my image, my voice and my opinions, disseminated by any of the above means, provided that this is done in contexts and in ways that do not affect my personal dignity and decorum.

The images, in particular, may be used as part of the European research project, called MeDeMaP, and may be stored in the University's computer archives.

2. I hereby state that the above authorization is granted **completely free of charge** and that, therefore, IULM University shall not pay me any fee or reimbursement of expenses in relation to any filming or recording of my image or voice, nor in relation to any subsequent use or exploitation of the same filming or recordings.

Furthermore, I hereby:

3. release IULM University from any and all liability arising from any statement I may have made during the filming of my image and/or the recording of my voice which may infringe the rights of third parties;

4. expressly renounce any claim, even of a compensatory nature, against IULM University for any damaging consequences, of any kind, that may occur to me as a result of the recording, diffusion or use of my voice, my statements, my image and/or my name IULM University;

6. with regard to the processing of personal data, reference should be made to the specific privacy policy attached to this Declaration.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

The recorded person \_\_\_\_\_

Pursuant to and for the purposes of Articles 1341 and 1342 of the Civil Code, I specifically approve the following clauses:

- no. 2: relating to the waiver of any remuneration or reimbursement of expenses;
- nos. 3 and 4: relating to the indemnity and waiver of any claim or compensation;

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

The recorded person \_\_\_\_\_

## **MeDeMaP PROJECT - Interview**

### **INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT**

**Research Project:** Horizon Europe Research Project - Mapping Media for Future Democracies

**Project Leader:** Andrea Miconi

**Data collection managers:** Elisabetta Risi; Giulia Ferri

Dear participant,

**With the following form we would like to ask you to participate in the research project Mapping Media for Future Democracies (MeDeMAP).** Please read carefully the following information about the aims of the research and how it will be carried out before deciding whether or not to give your consent.

Please take the time to read the following information and do not hesitate to ask for clarification or further information.

#### **Aim of the research**

The MeDeMAP project, carried out in collaboration with ten European institutions, aims to understand the role and influence of the media in European democracies, particularly when it comes to citizens' political participation. By combining different research techniques, the study aims to identify ways to strengthen democracies through more transparent and accountable media practices.

#### **Activities**

The activity involves one-to-one interviews with a researcher, lasting one hour.

#### **Participation and withdrawal**

Participation in interview is voluntary. You have the right not to answer and/or not to continue with the research and to withdraw at any time.

## Audio Recording

For the purposes of the study, the activity will be audio recorded. Audio and transcripts of the activity will be for the exclusive use of the IULM research team, who will guarantee the complete confidentiality of the data collected.

Please contact Prof. Andrea Miconi ([andrea.miconi@iulm.com](mailto:andrea.miconi@iulm.com)), Prof. Elisabetta Risi ([Elisabetta.risi@iulm.com](mailto:Elisabetta.risi@iulm.com)), Giulia Ferri ([giulia.ferri@iulm.com](mailto:giulia.ferri@iulm.com)) for any further information or clarification.

## CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION

The undersigned \_\_\_\_\_ declares by signing the following form:

- That I have read the contents of this form and that I understand them;
- That I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have received appropriate answers;
- That I understand that participation in this study involves information being collected by audio recording and transcription;
- That I give my consent to the processing of my personal data collected as part of this research in the manner and for the purposes described above;
- That I agree to take part in the research.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_

# MeDeMaP PROJECT - Interview

Information note pursuant to art. 13 of EU Reg. 2016/679- GDPR

## 1. DATA PROCESSORS

**THE DATA CONTROLLER**, pursuant to Articles 4 and 24 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679 is Libera Università di Lingue e Comunicazione IULM located in Via Carlo Bo, 1 - 20143 Milan represented by its pro-tempore legal representative.

In compliance with Articles 37-39 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the University has appointed a Data Protection Officer (DPO) who can be contacted at the following email address: [dpo.iulm@dpoprofessionalservice.it](mailto:dpo.iulm@dpoprofessionalservice.it).

## 2. DATA PROCESSED

The processing concerns the following personal data of the participant: personal data (name, surname, age, gender, educational qualification, email address, telephone number) and, subject to your consent, may consist of recording your voice. As part of the interviews, "particular" personal data will also be collected, i.e. data capable of revealing racial or ethnic origin, religious and philosophical beliefs and political opinions.

## 3. PURPOSES OF PROCESSING AND LAWFUL BASIS

Personal data, including of a particular nature, will be processed, in accordance with the conditions for lawful processing set out in article 6, paragraph 1, letter a) of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, for the following purpose:

subject to Your consent and until its revocation, participation in the study and activities of the Scientific Research Project issued by the European Commission entitled "*Mapping Media for Future Democracies- MeDeMaP*" through interviews.

It is specified that the final results of this research will be disclosed anonymously and in an aggregate manner. It will therefore no longer be possible, following the outcome of the research, to trace the personal data, even particular ones, to a recognized and recognizable subject.

## 4. COMMUNICATION, TRANSFER AND DISSEMINATION OF PERSONAL DATA

The data collected will be processed by University researchers and researchers involved in the project, who act on the basis of specific instructions provided regarding the purposes and methods of the processing itself.

The interviews, organized as part of the European research project called MeDeMaP, will first be audio-recorded and then transcribed and archived in text format. In this last phase, participants will be given pseudonyms in order to anonymize the data that will be disseminated. The audio recordings will be stored in the University's computer archives to which only the researchers involved in the Project will have access.

The data may be communicated to third parties belonging to the following categories:

- entities that provide services for the management of the information system and communication networks (including e-mail and web);
- competent authorities for the fulfilment of legal obligations and/or provisions of public bodies, at their request.

The subjects belonging to the above-mentioned categories will act as Data Processors, or they may operate independently as autonomous Data Controllers. The list of the Data Processors for each Controller is constantly updated and available at their respective offices and at the contacts indicated in point 1 of the policy. Your personal data will not be transferred abroad except for possible revisions by the other partners of the Project. This transfer will in any case take place within the European Economic Area - EEA.

## **5. PROCESSING PROCEDURES AND DATA STORAGE**

The processing of personal data will be carried out using IT tools, adopting adequate technical and organizational measures to protect them from unauthorized or illicit access, destruction, loss of integrity and confidentiality, even accidental. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, the data will subsequently be deprived of directly identifying references (e.g. name and surname, etc.), so that they are no longer immediately attributable to the subject to whom they refer, and analyzed for the sole purpose of the implementation of the Project. Personal data will be kept for a maximum period of 5 years from the end of the Project and subsequently destroyed.

## **6. NATURE OF THE CONFERMENT AND REFUSAL**

The provision of your personal data for the purposes referred to in paragraph 3 of this policy is optional. Your refusal to provide the data will make it impossible for the Data Controller to allow you to participate in the Research Project.

## **7. RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS**

You may exercise your rights in accordance with the provisions set out in articles 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, by contacting the Data Controller, or the Data Protection Officer under article.38 paragraph 4, by contacting the Personnel Department. You have the right at any time to ask the Data Controller for access to your personal data, rectification, erasure, restriction of processing, as well as the portability of your data. Without prejudice to any other administrative or jurisdictional appeal, should you believe that the processing of your data violates the provisions of Regulation (EU) 2016/679, pursuant to article 15 letter f) of the aforementioned Regulation (EU) 2016/679, you have the right to make a complaint to the Guarantor for the protection of personal data and, with reference to article 6, paragraph 1, letter a) and article 9, paragraph 2, letter a), you have the right to revoke the consent given at any time. In the case of a request for data portability, the Data Controller will provide the personal data regarding the data subject from an automated device in a structured format which is legible and in common use, without prejudice to paragraphs 3 and 4 of article 20 of Regulation (EU) 2016/679.

## CONSENT TO THE PROCESSING

Pursuant to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 I, the undersigned, \_\_\_\_\_

<please flag>

- declare to have read the Privacy Policy** of IULM University regarding the processing of my personal data during the interviews organized by University as part of the the Scientific Research Project entitled "*Mapping Media for Future Democracies- MeDeMaP*"
- I express my consent** to the processing of **my voice** for scientific purposes, as indicated in this information note.
- I express my consent** to the processing of **my particular personal data**, as data capable of revealing religious and philosophical beliefs and political opinions, for scientific purposes, as indicated in this information note.

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE\_\_\_\_\_

## References

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