

The Prague Media conference brought journalism and media communications experts together for a discussion on the role of media in today's world

Prague, 6 November 2017

**The theme of the fourth Prague Media Point conference was "The Media in the Post-True World: The New Marketplace of (Dis)information". It was held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> –4<sup>th</sup> of November and was attended by several prominent journalists and experts in the media and communications field. The conference was organized by KEYNOTE in cooperation with Transitions, a non-profit organization.**

The opening panel, "Regaining Truth: How can Journalism and Liberal Democracy flourish in the Post-Truth Age," was held at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany and it dealt with the causes of declining trust in traditional journalism. On the main principles of constructive journalism, **Cathrine Gyldensted** offered that, "an obstacle to restoring confidence in traditional media is the negative setting of today's journalism. A journalist should be critical in his thinking, not in his attitude. The task of journalism is not only to inform on current events but to address the real problems of people, to contextualize events, and to offer solutions to our problems". Editor-in-Chief of the Slovak daily Denník N, **Matúš Kostolný**, added, "It is worth fighting for democracy and from this point of view I am an activist. Without democracy, independent journalism cannot exist".

Other parts of the conference took place at New York University in Prague and were attended by 90 experts from around the world. Discussion topics included the role of traditional media and the spread of fake news. On this subject, **Ute Schaeffer** from the Deutsche Welle Academy said that, "as journalists we have to stop finding excuses why not to react in the face of fake news! We have to offer inspirational stories to the public". Unfortunately, it is often politicians themselves, who spread false information to legitimize their policies," The problem isn't that politicians don't read traditional news, but that they ignore it," said **Maranke Wieringa** from Utrecht University.

The conference also featured presentations of successful projects that focus on enhancing media literacy and validating facts. IREX introduced a project to increase media literacy in Ukraine. "It does not matter what information we receive, but how we receive it," said project **director Mehri Karyadgyeva**.

At a panel hosted by Russia expert **Mark Galeotti** and leading sinologist **Martin Hála**, the spread of state propaganda was discussed. Martin Hála argued that that while Russia may attempt to delegitimize the Western narrative it lacks a competitive strategy or ideology. Chinese propaganda, on the other hand, is both better funded and strategic, and offers a well thought out Chinese alternative to the 'decaying' Western model.

This was the fourth of a series of conferences organized as part of the Prague Media Point project, which focuses on media and media environment transformation. Photos from the conference and its summary will be available on the organizer's website at [www.keynote.cz](http://www.keynote.cz).

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