

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

# POPULISM

IN NATIONAL AND GLOBAL MEDIA

**24-25 November 2023**

Vilnius University, Theatre Hall and Library, Room 238  
(Universiteto str. 3, Vilnius)

Organized by



Faculty of  
Communication

With partners

**LRT**



Journal of *Studies in Eastern  
European Cinema* (Taylor and  
Francis Group)

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Faculty of  
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## Organizer

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### Partners:

Lithuanian National Radio and Television  
<https://www.lrt.lt/>

*Journal of Studies in Eastern European Cinema* (Taylor and Francis Group)  
<https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/reec20>

*Central European Journal of Communication* (Polish Communication Association)  
<https://cejc.ptks.pl/>

### Local Organizing Team:

Assoc. Prof. dr. Renata Šukaitytė (Chair),  
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### Conference Scientific Committee:

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### Sponsors:

Vilnius University Science Support Fund  
Faculty of Communication (Vilnius University)  
Research Council of Lithuania

## Dear Conference Delegates,

We cordially welcome you to the “Populism in National and Global Media” Conference, hosted by the Faculty of Communication, Vilnius University!

The theme of the Conference – populism in local and global media – appeared naturally from the insightful observation of the rise of nationalist political discourses in media, citizens’ protests, and their views expression on social media, associated with major political events and campaigns – the COVID-19 pandemic, Russia’s war in Ukraine, and the dramatic economic setback in recent years. This situation was well exploited by a range of actors (media professionals, politicians, influencers, and celebrities) in their populist communication and rhetoric across different media channels.

In the light of all these constellations and challenges in Europe and worldwide, an idea evolved to summon media scholars and practitioners to discuss the nexus between populism, politics, communication, media, and wider society. Thus, we were pleased to receive numerous insightful proposals by media and communication scholars from Lithuania and abroad. We hope that the rich Conference programme will offer inspiring and fruitful scholarly discussions and exchanges.

The program proposes 3 keynote panels, 9 paper panels and 1 roundtable discussion, and will accommodate 43 scholars with 35 conference papers. Our wonderful keynote speakers – Prof. Dr Agnieszka Stępińska, Prof. Dr Ewa Mazierska, and Prof. Dr Susana Salgado – will introduce different perspectives on populism in media. We hope that the Conference participants and guests will find it informative and engaging.

I express my gratitude to the Dean of the Faculty of Communication Prof. Dr Renata Matkevičienė and the Vice-Dean for Science of the Faculty of Communication Prof. Dr Arūnas Gudinaičius for providing multiple support for this event as well as local organizing team – Agnė Zumbrikaitė, Raminta Labanauskienė, Kristina Gedvilaitė, Skirmantė Granickienė, Dr Renata Stonytė and Greta Tamulionienė – for making this Conference possible.

I would like to thank Indrė Makaraitytė, Zsolt Győri, Dr Renata Matkevičienė, Dr Mantas Martišius, Dr Andrius Gudauskas, Dr Deimantas Jastramskis, Dr Vincas Grigas, Dr Džina Donauskaitė, Dr Renata Stonytė, Dr Viktor Denisenko, Magnus Tomas Kėvišas, and Liutauras Ulevičius for moderating the panels and roundtable discussion!

We sincerely thank our sponsors and partners: Lithuanian National Radio and Television; Vilnius University Science Support Fund; Faculty of Communication (Vilnius University); and Research Council of Lithuania.

We look forward to meeting you in the Conference  
and hope you will have enjoyable time in Vilnius!

Assoc. Prof. Dr Renata Šukaitytė,

The Chair of the Conference Scientific Committee  
and the Local Organizing Team

## Schedule of Events at a Glance

### 24 November (Friday)

- 9.00–9.30 **Registration** (Theatre Hall)
- 10.00–11.00 **Keynote Session 1** (Theatre Hall): Agnieszka Stępińska (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland)
- 11.15–12.45 **Panel Session 1** (Theatre Hall): Populism, Polarization and Media Literacy
- 11.15–12.45 **Panel Session 2** (Library, Room 238): Media, Politics, Populism
- 12.45–14.15 **Lunch break** (optional, Grey (Pilies str. 2))
- 14.15–15.15 **Keynote Session 2** (Theatre Hall): Ewa Mazierska (University of Central Lancashire, UK / University of Gdansk, Poland)
- 15.30–17.00 **Panel Session 3** (Theatre Hall): Populist Discourse in Eastern European Audiovisual and Social Media
- 15.30–17.00 **Panel Session 4** (Library, Room 238): Populism in Digital and Mass Culture
- 17.15–18.15 **Roundtable Discussion** (Theatre Hall): Lithuanian Journalists' Responses to Populism
- 18.15–19.30 **Reception** (Theatre Hall)

### 25 November (Saturday)

- 9.00–9.30 **Registration** (Theatre Hall)
- 9.30–10.45 **Panel Session 5** (Theatre Hall): Populism in Contemporary Hungarian Cinema: Historical, Generic, Comparative and Transnational Contexts
- 9.30–10.45 **Panel Session 6** (Library, Room 238): Politics and Populism in Film and TV
- 11.00–12.00 **Keynote Session 3** (Theatre Hall): Susana Salgado (University of Lisbon, Portugal), Populism and Denialism: Studying Interconnections and Processes
- 12.00–13.30 **Lunch Break** (optional, Bernelių užėiga (Pilies str. 10))
- 13.30–15.00 **Panel Session 7** (Theatre Hall): Political Populism During Times of Crisis
- 13.30–15.00 **Panel Session 8** (Library, Room 238): Populist Leaders and Politicians
- 15.15–16.30 **Panel Session 9** (Theatre Hall): Populism During Elections and Sport Events
- 16.30–17.00 **Concluding Remarks** (Theatre Hall)
- 18.30–20.30 **Dinner** (optional, "Grey", Pilies str. 2)

## POPULISM IN THE MEDIA DURING THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

Prof. Dr. Nina Zrazhevskya, Borys Hrinchenko Kyiv University (Ukraine)

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### Abstract

Russian aggression against Ukraine will intensify the growth of populism in the media and has serious consequences on the information agenda. The media in different countries cover the conflict through different ideological lenses, while sometimes exacerbating divisions and encouraging a violent sentiment. Populist leaders and movements have taken advantage of this situation by using the media to promote their own agendas and manipulate the public opinion.

One aspect of media populism during the Russian aggression against Ukraine was the dissemination of sensational and biased narratives. Some media outlets have tended to present information in the ways which evoke fear, anger or victimhood, often in favor of their own national or ideological interests. This leads to an increase in divisive narratives, such as portraying Ukrainians as aggressors, or portraying Russians as heroic defenders.

Social media platforms have been playing a significant role in spreading populist narratives during the conflict. They provide a space where disinformation, propaganda, and inflammatory rhetoric can quickly reach a wide audience, thereby amplifying the already existing divisions and helping to polarize the public opinion. The lack of fact-checking and the rapid spread of information on the social media made it easier for populists to exploit the situation and manipulate the public sentiment.

In addition, populist politicians use the conflict to advance their own political agendas and capitalize on the public discontent. They often use simplistic narratives which resonate with the public by posing as strong leaders who will protect the national interests and restore stability. It appeals to those who have become disillusioned with the prevailing policies and institutions and who are looking for simple solutions to complex problems.

The rise of populism in the media during this period has a significant impact on the public discourse and influences how the conflict is perceived and interpreted by different audiences.

### Biography of the presenter

NINA ZRAZHEVSKA, Doctor of Science in Social Communications, Professor of the Department of International Journalism. She is a member of: the National Assembly of Journalists of Ukraine, the Specialized Marriage classified as D 26.001.34 for the specialty 00.27.01 – Theory and History of Social Communications – from 2016 to 2018; expert of philological sciences and social communications at the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine from 2015 to 2018; member of NMC for journalism and social communications KNU im. T. Shevchenko since 2007; member of the editorial board of scientific scholarship Social communications: theory and practice; member of the editorial board of the scientific journal *Bulletin of Kharkiv National University named after V. N. Karazina. Series: Social Communications* since 2014 (m. Kharkiv); member of the editorial board of the journal *Irpinsk Humanitarian Bulletin* since 2016 (m. Irpin); head of the expert commission Accreditation Expertise for the Preparation of Masters of ChNU im. B. Khmelnytsky 8.18010019 Media communication Gruden 2015; head of the department of media communication of the Ukrainian Catholic University from 2013 to 2020; guarantor of the professional/illumination-science journalism program of Kiev Boris Hrinchenko University.