

IAMCR Working Group on Global Media Policy
The Global Media Policy mapping project
Report 2008: from Stockholm to Mexico

Claudia Padovani, November 2008

1. Coming from Paris 2007

A full report of the Global Media Policy Working group (WG) activities at the IAMCR Conference in Paris was prepared for the IAMCR October 2007 Newsletter. There you can find a summary concerning the two sessions which took place at the conference where the concept of a project mapping Global Media Policy and Communication Governance was presented and discussed.

We left Paris with a number of open issues concerning:

- a) refining the framework
- b) clarification of concepts and terminology
- c) need to further discuss the Atlas concept which was proposed
- d) further steps to be taken towards an open and collaborative project

2. Venice and Padua 2008: developments on GMP mapping

In April 2008 an international seminar was organized in Venice titled "Mapping Global Media Policy: concepts, frameworks, methods". Preceded by a series of skype conversations among GMP mapping interested people (where the rational, basic concepts and lines for action were refined), the seminar offered the possibility to open the project to comments from invited speakers: Sandra Braman, Ulla Carlsson, Hans Klein, Maria Michalis, Jason Nardi, Caroline Pauwels and Josef Trappel contributed from their respective disciplinary backgrounds and points of view to identify potentialities and challenges of the project.

Following the Venice seminar, a small operative workshop took place in Padua (attended by Marc Raboy, Claudia Padovani, Arne Hintz, Claire Roberge, Ayesha Mawani, Jeremy Shtern) where a more precise definition of the project concept was reached.

A short version of the project presentation is made available on the WG website (see: <https://www.iamcr.org/content/blogcategory/37/148/>).

The main elements of the proposal were:

- a) an agreed upon definition of Global Media Policy as a field of research and practice;
- b) an agreed upon definition of the project's main goal and the idea of "mapping as methodology";
- c) the project consistently conceived as a three layers exercise: map generation (a repository of relevant data concerning GMP following the overall framework: issues & actors), map interpretation (a two-strand activity to elaborate on those information through automated visual representations and high level scientific analysis) and map use (in view of creating a global multi-stakeholder partnership).

3. GMP mapping activities at the Stockholm IAMCR Conference 2008

On this basis of discussions in Venice and Padua, power point presentations were prepared for the Stockholm conference, where a number of activities were arranged in order to make it accessible to and open to contributions from interested people and potential participants (ppts are now available on the IAMCR website):

1. IAMCR Task Force Pre-conference

A very stimulating pre-conference was organized by Andrew Calabrese and the IAMCR Task Force on Media Policy, title "Promoting Public Knowledge of Media Policy Research". An entire session of the conference was devoted to Policy mapping as a resource for media policy activism: Raboy, Padovani and Hintz offered different perspectives on the WG mapping project, its aims at reducing the complexities of the global media policy environment for analytical and practical purposes, while offering directions for interested actors' understanding, deliberation and action. The roundtable focused mostly on the benefits of mapping efforts for media policy activists and on the need to integrate stakeholders' needs right from the beginning of the project (through focus groups, direct engagement of users, constant feedback from outside). Furthermore, it was stressed that the project is not just conceived for separated users but to foster multi-stakeholder dialogues, including academics, practitioners (es: seminars being organized in CEU); in this light connections could be found with the UNESCO-IAMCR joint research agenda. Suggestions were also made to identify, analyze and connect to other mapping efforts and to include a strong historical dimension into the mapping exercise.

Ppts from the round table are available (please contact claudia.padovani@unipd.it).

2. Sessions of the WG

The first of the WG sessions (22 July, 17.45-19.00) was devoted to *Mapping Global Media Policy: introducing the project*. Raboy, Padovani, Hintz and Tomaselli offered their perspectives, introduced developments since Paris and outlined the what, why and how of the latest version of the project (see above & introductory notes available on IAMCR website).

The second WG session (23 July, 14.00-15.30) featured a number of speakers invited to offer their comments and suggestions on the project: Ulla Carlsson Nordicom), Caroline Pauwels (Free University of Brussels), Barbara Thomas (EuroMedia Research group), Joe Bardoel (University of Amsterdam) and Ruth Tomaselli (University of Natal). The discussion was meant to situate "European Media Policy" within the framework of the working group's mapping project, as well as to identify challenges in reaching out to other regional contexts. Participants contributed in identifying priority areas in which European media policy is currently been conducted and research centres, networks, and other resources that could

be connected to the Global Media Policy mapping project. I particular the following have been suggested:

Carlsson: Turning data into new knowledge requires work. Conceptual framework of 40 years ago is not adequate. Today field is broad, diverse, we need a more holistic perspective - EU media policy reflect much of what happens worldwide, therefore the EU can be a good pilot project. Nevertheless both global and regional are both needed to understand: we need comparative studies, be open to cross-cultural approaches and non-western thoughts. (Ulla Carlsson also prepared a very interesting working paper on the occasion of the Venice seminar, with very detailed comments on the project and suggestions to move forward. It is available, contact claudia.padovani@unipd.it).

Pauwels: The project is ambitious but the idea is great: a research tool, education tool, policy tool (very useful in the long term). There should be an ambition beneath: a lobby effort in making information transparent and accessible and press institutional actors to keep track of info in a more systematic way. The map will gain with update: it is difficult to track people who are moving through different organizations (looking at people, not just org.s). Looking at policy at transnational level (WTO, ITU) traditional policy instruments are under pressure: we need to provide evidence based analysis, to avoid the risk that all those instruments make the difference. A big question: UNESCO cultural diversity convention makes a difference? Subsidiarity issue: on which level you create cultural difference + when is subsidiarity against cultural diversity? When do we really need the global level? No more studies on flows... Inter-institutional dialectics are also to be tracked: formal and informal power relationships must be brought to the fore. Finally, can mapping help in fostering interdisciplinary dialogues?

Bardoel: Mapping GMP sounds very ambitious: is it a combination of everything that happens at different levels? Debates on GMP died out in '70s. Today we need to be careful: global also means remaining at the surface = think global but act local. Need for an overall framework should be accompanied by a focus on the level that is most relevant: it would be the national? European? A combination? Furthermore: we have a problem with interest groups: good to refer to advocacy, but where are they? How to track? There is a possibility for the project to be descriptive but also analytic tool: this would be preferable. Thus it would help identify power relations, dynamics, carrier of policy issues. Finally, as for themes to focus on: media governance (multi-level, multi-stakeholder), EU cultural perspectives (vs economic and market perspectives), Diversity (seldom mentioned, or used but ill defined), convergence.

Thomas: The project meets a need: which spaces can be kept open within a very much commercialized media space? Not only as a tool, but as activation/exchange tool and Lobby/enhancing tool. The main challenge: activities have to find a balance between giving a frame but being flexible to be able to enter new issues, activities. EuropMedia group had a good experience in gathering data, including new members, etc and flexibility and comparability has been experienced. Thus the whole issue would be: "how do we work together"? As for issues in the European context: public service

media and future developments (need to defend) + issues to which media policy relate to: public sphere, democratic needs, concentration, youth and media use. Finally: gathering of data OK, but then it is important to discuss the concepts that are behind the data: we do understand the same things? In the EU communication space there is huge richness of data, but what's missed is reflection...

Tomaselli: we have borrowed the idea and used the framework to develop a research proposal to National science foundation: map the field broadcasting, telecom and print media in Southern African States. It is about making sense of the available data concerning government media/public media, private commercial media and community media. Work on different media types: broadcasting (TV and radio), press (quality newspapers, community newspapers, tabloid), telecommunication and ICTs (as well as platforms of delivery: signal providers, telecom networks, fiber optic networks...). Addressed issues: ownership; partnership and trans-level connections, transnational media and transnational content, circulation of people within media groups. Also governance arrangements and regulation: roles of ITU, WTO, and policy in countries (es issues of local ownership and local content, issues of nationalism through sport, language policy, migration of digital TV). The processes is showing there are lots of resources, it is possible and relevant to bring all those together.

- The final WG session (24 July, 14.00-15.30) was a business meeting devoted to discussing the next steps. In particular, it was agreed that:
 - a) we have to think of media policy even if media policy interest is very limited,
 - b) in order to understand and act in media policy at any level you have to have access to range of info from different context and levels,
 - c) media policy specialists have a set of needs of interest and needs that can be addressed by a project like this. The best way to proceed would be to develop a small number of **consistent pilot projects**, in order to test the framework (terminology, categories and typology), the methodology (the three layers and interconnection), the electronic tools (communication channels and electronic platform for data collection and elaboration). During this meeting Claudia Padovani was also nominated as the new chair for the Working Group.

3. Contacts and potential for cooperation

Contacts were made in Stockholm with a number of people who are either carrying on similar mappings efforts or have the knowledge and resources to contribute to WG mapping:

- Joe Kariganis from the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), the person responsible of their Media Research Hub developed within the Necessary Knowledge for Democratic Societies (<http://mediaresearchhub.ssrc.org/>) on how to join forces between technical expertise and theoretical frameworks;
- Ulla Carlsson on how Nordicom activities could be connected to the mapping. Nordicom can be a partner for: data collection (important to build on what's already in the arena, use existing knowledge

- resources) + monitoring services: policy documents, organizations (brief descriptions + links to websites) + circulation of newsletters, brief info on media policy issued by EU and CoE and links to all texts;
- a number of other existing/emerging mapping projects: the Media Law Assistance by Annenberg School of Communication, the Belgian mapping effort developed at the Free University of Brussels for the Flemish government, the EuroMedia Research group...
 - individual interested scholars and young researchers.

4. After Stockholm: on-going activities

Teams of interested people are therefore at work following the pilot idea. Projects are now being elaborated and/or conducted in different contexts on different issues: In Italy a team is working on Internet Governance, in South Africa a team is working on data concerning government media/public media, private commercial media and community media in four countries, in Quebec a team is working on the national dimension of cultural policy... They all make use of the mapping framework as a reference point, will organize for long-distance discussions (a face-to-face meeting is also planned in Venice in spring 2009) as the work proceeds and aim at converging into a single mapping space once the electronic tools will be available.

Extremely relevant to all this, is concrete synergy that started with SSRC: they are creating a platform for the collection and organization of data for the pilot projects, building on the experience of the Media Research Hub but integrated according to the logic of the GMP mapping project. This platform will shortly be made accessible to pilot developers, so that in the course of the coming months, a consistent organization of data and information will be conducted by each team as part of the overall mapping effort.

Yet, this implies clarification on a number of aspects and a core group of GMP members are now working on refining categories, labels, conceptualization of the framework according to which the platform will be structured. This is done keeping in mind some general aspects:

- accessibility to users and due consideration for their needs and competence;
- a consistent approach to Global Media Policy as a field of research and practice;
- clarity of language and consistency in reproducing the theoretical framework.

As for the articulation of language, the project/pilots and electronic platform should work with:

- four CATEGORIES: people, actors, policy documents and resources are the four labels through which data and information are articulated and a definition is being developed for each category;
- each category is further articulated into TYPES representing specific modalities of the category (thus people are divided into researchers,

- advocates and policy fonctionnaires, actors are divided into IGOs, transnational clubs, governments, private sector entities, public interest organizations etc.);
- the project will start by referring to a number of macro THEMATIC AREAS: mass media, telecommunications, ICTs, Internet governance, intellectual property rights, trade-related issues, development-related issues, culture-related issues, transversal and homeless issues.
 - each thematic area is further articulated into TOPICS ...

As the conceptual structure of the platform is being defined, we are also working on ideas to insert in the platform further functionalities, as accompanying tools to the dataset, responding to the project overall plan and objectives (the three layers, visualization tools, wiki-type spaces for open contributions etc.).

The aim at this stage to arrive at the Mexico City IAMCR Conference in 2009 with concrete examples of how the mapping framework and tool could work; how search could be done through the dataset, how different users could take advantage of this resource. But the overall goal is to use these pilots as a test for the subsequent elaboration of a fully developed GMP mapping project proposal.

Basic materials are being developed as move forward in the project, to be made available to interested people and potential participants in an effort which is conceived to be open but grounded in a sound theoretical and methodological architecture.

Updates on the pilot experience will be made available through the GMP mapping communication channels:

WG GMP webpage:

<https://www.iamcr.org/content/blogcategory/37/148/>

If you want to subscribe to the mailing list send your email address to our contact email:

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