



SSE RIGA

Anne-Marie and Gustaf Ander  
Centre for Media Studies

# ACTIVITY REPORT 2017/2018



# FAKE NEWS

Clinton News: Pedophile ring in Washington pizza restaurant and fake votes by the thousands.

Brexit got help from fake news about immigration to Britain.

88% of grown up american citizens believe fake news will create confusion in the society.

Elections 2016, 2017 and 2018: United States, Germany, France, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Norway, Italy and now - *Sweden*.

Facebook will face multi million fines in Germany.



# OVERVIEW

## The Media Centre is developing in three areas:

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- **Training in investigative reporting with a focus on corruption and organised crime.**

The training is almost always carried out in cooperation with the OCCRP (Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project). The area has been the core of the Centre's activities – there is a great and increasing need for investigative reporting in the world. The training sessions, with one exception, were organised in Riga with cross-border journalism forming the basis for each programme.

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- **Networking and capacity building in the Region.**

The first meeting of the Independent Russian-Language Media Outlet Network took place in 2016 when approximately 20 independent media outlets met in Riga. The network has grown to include 49 media outlets that are members of this informal network. SSE Riga is the coordinator and the partners are the Meduza Project and the OCCRP.

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- **Sustainability and Media Management is a new developing area.**

In Autumn 2017, the first four-week mini-MBA programme was launched, and in spring 2018 the Centre delivered a three-week management programme for middle management of Russian media, a one-week programme for young media entrepreneurs and a media accelerator programme. These

programmes are unique and have received international attention. The area is essential for creating sustainability for the media outlets that belong to SSE Riga. In the spring, cooperation on media entrepreneurship started with the Tow-Knight Center at the City University of New York. One goal in the future is to create a meeting point for new and traditional media regarding how to develop journalism entrepreneurship and new business models for media.

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- **Other areas that are a priority include a security and rescue programme for journalists who are in danger and need to leave their countries immediately for reasons of personal safety.**

During the reporting year several journalists in the network were killed, or received death threats, or faced other means of intimidation due to their work. In cooperation with the OCCRP, we are developing training programmes for both media managers and journalists. The responsibility for security is always on the shoulders of the editors and management, but there is a lack of proper training available for this group. During the reporting year the Centre developed the capacity to rescue journalists under threat by bringing them to safety in Riga for a short period until the risk is eliminated and alternative long-term solutions are found.





# ACTIVITIES 2017/2018

## Overall comments

- The support from “Anne-Marie och Gustaf Anders Stiftelse för Mediaforskning” (the Anne-Marie and Gustaf Ander Foundation) continues to play a crucial role and forms the basis for the Centre’s activities. It directly finances some operations and co-finances some projects.
- The process of developing new programmes and finding new partners continues. The donation from the Foundation is vital in getting these grants since the donors almost always ask for some co-funding. The donation from the Foundation is partly used to ensure this co-funding.

## Highlights during 2017/2018 were as follows:

- In Spring the last module of mini-EMBA programme “Future Media Management Programme” was completed, and 20 participants graduated from the programme. The programme has been a success and has gained international recognition. During the last module, the participants had to present a business plan for their media outlets. Several of them could tell that they have already started to implement new business models. This programme will continue, and it will be developed further.
- The sixth Summer School on Investigative Journalism took place in August. As in previous years the content focused on corruption and organised crime and was designed in cooperation with the OCCRP. This year more than 100 participants from 16 different countries participated. The keynote speaker this year was David Kaplan, President of the Global Investigative Journalist Network. Another notable speaker was Elena Milashina, an award-winning

investigative journalist for Novaya Gazeta. Following the assassination of her colleague and mentor, Anna Politkovskaya, in 2006, Milashina became the key source of truth on gay rights abuses in Chechnya.

- Last year's success with the News Verification Guide was followed this year by the launching of a legal guide for journalists in Estonia and Latvia. The guide was the result of a request from journalists in both countries since there is a lack of knowledge on the rights and obligations of journalists. Publication was carried out in cooperation with the Nordic Centre for Journalism. In addition to being published in the respective local languages, both guides were published in Russian and English. The project was partly supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers.
- For the second year, a programme in digital journalism (DIGIT 2.0) was organised in Minsk in cooperation with the Belarus Press Club at their facilities. This year the programme was five days (two weekends), and 24 journalists participated. The idea of the programme was in part to provide participants with knowledge and skills in digital journalism and in part to inspire participants with high-quality international lecturers.
- Last year's summer school for secondary school students in the Russian-speaking district in Tallinn, Lasnamäe, was followed this year by a new programme. The project continues through Autumn, since participants can publish stories on the news portal Delfi. Is carried out in cooperation with Delfi and Meduza Newsrooms. This unique programme in media literacy, aims to promote critical thinking and has received international attention.
- A new round of the Future Leaders Academy was launched in cooperation with the Swedish Embassy in Latvia. It is a leadership programme for young people interested in politics. Twenty participants from all over Latvia meet during eight weekends to discuss political ideas and values and get training on topics like the EU, political science and democracy. The project has received a lot of attention and was one of the main reasons why the Swedish Crown Princess visited SSE Riga in the spring.
- A unique cooperation between the investigative journalist team Re:Baltica and SSE Riga researchers launched in the autumn. The project, "We are dying out", consists of a series of articles about the issue of demography and lack of welfare policy in Latvia. The series was published both online and in print in Latvian and English. The publications will be used to launch SSE Riga's new

research centre, the Centre for a Sustainable Society. In addition to generating substantial media attention, the articles have received significant attention among Latvian politicians and were addressed at seminars during the democracy festival LAMPA.

- In January, the award-winning Swedish journalist Kerstin Weigl gave an open lecture and a workshop for journalists on domestic violence. This topic is controversial in Latvia since the government has still refused to ratify the Istanbul Convention, which implies commitments to prevent domestic violence. The open lectures were organised in cooperation with the women's resource centre MARTA. The workshop was geared towards journalists who cover topics related to domestic violence, and the aim was to give them training on how to interview victims and protect sources.
- The Young Media Enterprise Boot Camp was a one-week intensive workshop for young Russian-speaking bloggers in Estonia. In total, 15 participants aged 18–30 were given training and inspiration on entrepreneurship, leadership and how to develop their own media outlets. The programme was a success and will be followed by new programmes next year in both Estonia and Latvia.
- For the second time, the Centre participated with a tent (the so-called Swedish tent) at the Latvian democracy festival LAMPA. Several partners were invited to take part in the programme, such as the think tank Providus, the Latvian Journalist Association and the debate club QUO tu domā. The Swedish Embassy partly supported the participation with a grant. Mats Svegfors gave a lecture on Swedish welfare policy. Svegfors is a journalist and conservative politician; among other things he has served as state secretary, county governor and recently as CEO of Swedish Public Radio. Like last year, the Swedish tent was recognised as the best designed, and the programme and content were ranked as among the best by the organiser.







## Other noteworthy activities:

- During the last few years, the Media Centre has supported journalists who have had to flee their home countries.
- A partnership has been initiated with the Swedish FOJO Media Institute. This year the Media Centre organised one conference for the FOJO media network and one three-week management programme for middle management.
- In the spring the Board of Directors at SSE Riga decided to change the name of the Centre to "The Anne-Marie and Gustaf Ander Centre for Media Studies at SSE Riga" to pay tribute to the Centre's main benefactor, the Swedish foundation Anne-Marie och Gustaf Anders Stiftelse för Mediaforskning.

# ORGANISATION

The Centre has had a slim organisation with only one full-time person employed, Sabīne Sīle-Eglīte, who is the Director with administrative responsibilities. Lāsma Antoneviča supports Sabīne with the programmes. Handling the increasing number of participants from countries outside the EU is very time-consuming. A major task is providing participants with visas, insurance, plane tickets and travel documents, which involves a lot of bureaucracy and requires dedicated assistance. However, the costs are mostly covered by grants. Furthermore, the increasing number of activities in Estonia thanks to the fruitful cooperation with the Swedish Embassy has resulted in Julia Rodina running the Estonian activities on a project basis.

Hans Månson is responsible for the content of programmes in the field of investigative reporting. Mark Lee Hunter, a journalist and professor at INSEAD, is involved in the media management programmes.

Within the SSE Riga management, Anders Alexanderson has the overall responsibility for the Media Centre and oversees its activities.







# LIST OF ACTIVITIES

## 2017 (Autumn)

- Summer School on Investigative Journalism 2017
- Summer School for Meduza
- Two network meetings of the Independent Russian-Language Media Outlet Network
- Workshops on debate technique for journalists, in cooperation with the SSE Riga Debate Club
- Editorial conference and training for Russia-based Meduza journalists
- Journalism for Future Challenges 2017, modules 2 and 3
- Future Media Management, module 4
- Greste Baltic Freedom of Speech Award Debate on anonymous online comments and Award Ceremony with keynote speaker Ulrika Knutson
- Master class with Ben Dreyfuss: "How to attract a young audience"
- Open lecture by Howard Duncan: "Economic benefits of hosting immigrants"
- Video training for members of the network
- The Baltic Media Accelerator programme, four sessions in cooperation with Aktis Strategy
- Possibility for Latvian journalists to attend SSE Riga Executive Education programmes (Mini-EMBA and Negotiation Skills)
- FOJO conference for journalists – two-day conference in cooperation with FOJO
- Open lecture by Joris Luyendijk: "How to investigate groups who do not want to be investigated: a case study of investment bankers"





- “We are dying out”, a series of articles about the demography in Latvia. Cooperation between SSE Riga researchers and Re:Baltica.
- FOJO management programme: a three-week programme for media middle management. Module 1.
- The Baltic Media Health Check 2016 in cooperation with Re:Baltica
- The Youth Journalism Award in cooperation with the Ministry of Culture to support journalism students interested in implementing ideas in partnership with media organisations

## 2018 (Spring)

- Elective course for the SSE Riga B.Sc. programme on investigative reporting
- Summer School for Meduza
- Elective course for the SSE Riga B.Sc. programme on investigative reporting
- Latvian Journalist Association annual meeting and award ceremony for best journalism in Latvia. For the second year, the Centre contributed with an award for best editor in the field of investigative reporting.
- Launching of the Latvian legal guide for journalists. Publication of the guide, informative seminar.
- Launching of the Estonian legal guide for journalists. Publication of the guide, informative seminar.
- Participating in the democracy festival LAMPA, a two-day event in cooperation with the Swedish Embassy, the Nordic Council, Providus, MARTA, QUO tu domā and the Latvian Journalist Association. The journalist and former CEO of Swedish Public Radio Mats Svegfors gave a lecture on Swedish welfare policy.
- DIGIT 2.0: Five-day training (2 weekends) for Belarusian journalists. The training took place in Minsk.
- The spring network meeting of the Independent Russian-Language Media Outlet Network
- Future Leaders Academy modules 1–4 in cooperation with the Swedish Embassy in Latvia

- Summer school in Lasnamäe for the second year. In cooperation with the Swedish embassy in Tallinn.
- Future Media Management 2016/17, modules 2 and 3
- FOJO Management Programme, a three-week programme for media middle management. Modules 2 and 3.
- Open lecture by Kerstin Weigl: "Violence against women: private family matters or a societal problem?"
- Workshop for Journalists with Kerstin Weigl: "How to report on violence against women"
- Two-day safety training for the Media Network
- Young Media Enterprise Boot Camp 2018. One-week business training for young media entrepreneurs.
- Open lecture by professor Bo Rothstein: "Making Sense of Corruption"

