

## **Regional Policy Seminar. Media in crisis. Virtual Content, Real Impact - Can ethics survive the market?**

The Aspen Institute Romania announces the Regional Policy Seminar: "Virtual Content, Real Impact - Can ethics survive the market?" (a perspective on the public interest and the state of ethics in journalism).

**Argument:** the media sector in Romania, the region and worldwide is questioning and reviewing its business models, ethical and practical relevance, mission, means and ends. The growing public preference for digital content, the emergence of new forms of social interaction and information collection (social networks, Google, Yahoo, blogs, etc.), the increasing impact of video rather than print/audio content, the rise in consumer-generated content etc. mark a shift away from established forms of communication, pose significant challenges but also offer unprecedented opportunity, generate moral concerns and require creative responses.

The most exposed to negative consequences are societies where freedom of expression has a rather recent tradition and not yet a firm enough foothold, while also media products have not yet passed so many successive quality tests.

**The Regional Policy Seminar** aims at bringing together participants from Romania and the Central/Eastern European region to discuss these new shared challenges, as well as preexisting conditions, to gain a better understanding of the state of the profession at this point and generate constructive ideas to make the best of this turning point in the evolution of the industry.

Editors/media managers and owners, media experts, journalists and marketers, public regulators and politicians will be focusing in the course of their three-day debate on issues such as:

Shifting communication models? A changing media or a changing society? What rules, what needs, what expectations? Cold shivers in the Big Brother world.

- Out of control? Citizen journalism, blogs, social networks - what ethical imperatives (if any)? What quality standards?

- "Agora" democracy/TV government = better democracy for more people or just soap opera? More information = more knowledge or more manipulation?

- Privacy, accuracy, data protection, distinction information/opinion - no more the norm? Will accuracy of information increasingly rely solely on balancing multiple sources? Is regulation necessary/desirable/possible?

- Loss of quality journalism? What journalists for what media - fewer but better/more and low-paid? The relation between employers (media owners, media managers) and journalists. Can a well-prepared, professional class of journalists be built and maintained in a context of economic crisis?

- Technology-driven change? Do we adjust content to new platforms? Do these have inherent characteristics which differ from traditional media outlets?

- Can traditional media survive? Is the solution "mass and cheap" or "niche and costly" products?

- How much choice is too much? (Not) getting lost in the jungle of infinite options and big data.

- Are strong management skills and financial soundness of media institutions a solution for delivery of independent, quality information and opinion? Is media as business compatible with media as public service?

For more information regarding participation please contact Ciprian Stanescu who is in charge with Leadership Programmes at Aspen Romania at [ciprian.stanescu@aspeninstitute.ro](mailto:ciprian.stanescu@aspeninstitute.ro) or at +4 0752 199 149.