

FROM ACCESS TO EMPOWERMENT: COUNTERING MARGINALIZATION OF ROMA COMMUNITIES IN ALBANIA THROUGH ALTERNATIVE MEDIA

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Submitted to
European University of Tirana
Doctoral School

In fulfilment of the requirements of the Doctoral Programme in
Communication Sciences, profile Media and Communication, to obtain the
scientific grade of “Doctor”

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Word count: 61, 415

Tirana, September 2016

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ABSTRACT

Roma communities in Albania, as elsewhere in Europe, face multifaceted exclusion and are placed at the margins of society. Roma are primarily defined in a mixed narrative between their marginalization as well as their peculiarity as a minority group. Roma have often been portrayed as a “problem” that needs to be solved and especially more so with the European Union accession process. Policies towards Roma have shifted in a continuum from normalisation, to Roma integration and more recently towards human rights based approach. The representation of the Roma communities in the mainstream media reflects and also (re)produces these discourses of power struggles, dominance and marginalization. This research has two main aims: first, to explore the ways in which various forms of alternative media could contribute to countering marginalization Roma communities in Albania through participation and empowerment; secondly, to elaborate a balance between technological innovation, media policy and values that could allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media.

This research draws from a critical stance on discourses about ‘normalisation’ and ‘integration’ of marginalised communities, which implies a reconsideration of the Habermas’ model of public sphere. The approach taken in regards to alternative media is in debt with the conceptualization of alternative media as put forward by Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2010) and Carpentier (2012) of alternative media as a rhizome at the crossroads between market, state and civil society and with participation as the core characteristic. The research adopts a qualitative methodology approach, namely that of Critical Discourse Analysis as a form of social practice that is specifically concerned with the relations between discourse, power, dominance and social inequality. CDA draws from the insights of the critical social theory and conceives of discursive data as socially constructed in certain social contexts. Through CDA the data gathered from document analysis, in-depth interviews and focus groups is analysed to unpack explicit and hidden social practices as well as structural relationships such as relations of dominance, practices and discourses of discrimination and structures of power.

The research argues that Alternative media contribution to countering marginalisation of Roma communities in Albania is directly linked to participation and empowerment. The embedded participatory media production processes enable Roma communities to put their communication rights in practice and negotiate their position in unequal power relations with dominant society. In addition, the contribution of alternative media is directly linked to the challenging of the concentration of symbolic power by giving voice to the Roma communities and enabling them to create their own meanings based on their own terms, not those of the majority. However, the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media to empower Roma communities in Albania is though limited by contextual media settings (digital divide, fragmented media market, financial sustainability, content and journalistic practices) and thus unable to fully challenge the existing dominant discourses. Policy recommendations and strategies for alternative media sustainability are provided. Also future research should focus on the questions of who is listening to alternative media and to what extent can alternative media.

DEDICATION

To the inspiring Roma youth

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to my professors for challenging me over and over again and always asking for more.

I am grateful to my colleagues in Tirana, Salzburg, London, Uppsala, and Guangzhou for sharing, understanding and caring.

I am grateful to my family for never asking for a reason, but just being supportive and loving.

I am grateful to my friends for being with me and coping with my mood swings while working on the thesis.

I am grateful to all those inspiring Roma people I met and talked to.

I am grateful to all scholars, researchers and academics I met all over the world through this journey for opening up new perspectives and sometimes even for confirming existing ones.

In the end, I am grateful for all the struggles I have been through to finalize this research as it helped me learn through success and failure, endure, reflect and move forward and most importantly grow. This doctoral research comes to an end with the realisation that it is never good enough and that there is still much to do.

Scientific Supervision and Research Fellowships

The doctoral studies were conducted principally at the European University of Tirana. In addition, the doctoral studies were enriched with research fellowships at leading media and communication departments in European universities as follows:

(i) *Research Fellowship at the Department of Political Science and Sociology at University of Salzburg, Austria* between January and February 2014. The research fellowship was awarded as a doctoral student by the Erasmus Mundus Sigma Agile project of the European Commission. The supervisor was Dr. Franz Kok. The fellowship served to look at alternative media through a critical perspective considering that one of the key scholars, Prof. Christian Fuchs, was a member of the University of Salzburg.

(ii) *Research Fellowship at the Communication and Media Research Institute, University of Westminster, London, United Kingdom* between February and May 2015. The Civil Society Scholars Award of the Open Society Institute awarded the research fellowship. The research supervisor was Dr. Roza Tsagarousianou, who is a Reader in Media and Communication and Course Leader for the MA Diversity and the Media as well as Convenor of the IAMCR Diaspora and the Media Working Group. This research fellowship was crucial to the development of the doctoral thesis further based on the feedback and suggestions of Dr. Tsagarousianou. Key scholars in this research area work at CAMRI such as like Prof. Christian Fuchs, Prof. Steven Barnett, Prof. Anastasia Kavada, prof. Jeanette Steemers, all of who inspired further the research work for the thesis.

(iii) *Research Fellowship at the Department of Informatics and Media, Uppsala University, Sweden*. The Swedish Institute awarded the research fellowship for the period September 2016 to October 2017. The supervisor is Prof. Nico Carpentier, who in addition is Associate Professor at the Communication Studies Department of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and Docent at Charles University in Prague. This constitutes the final phase of the doctoral studies with the thesis defence and publication, but it also marks a highlight given that the research topic has been initially inspired by the work of Prof. Carpentier on alternative media and is in debt with his conceptualisation of alternative media and participation.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AMA – Audio-visual Media Authority

AMI – Albanian media Institute

CSOs – Civil Society Organisations

E4SC – European for Social Change

EBU – European Broadcast Union

EC – European Commission

EU – European Union

GoA – Government of Albania

ICTs – Information and Communication Technologies

NGOS – Non Governmental Organizations

RRPP – Regional Research Promotion Programme

rtsh – Albanian Radio and Television

UNAOC – United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

UNESCO – United Nations Scientific, Education and Cultural Organization

WB – Western Balkans

CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background and Problem Statement

Throughout the history of media development from Gutenberg to Google, scholars have been interested in exploring the unsettling relation between media and democracy. A particular dimension of this highly complex media-democracy interrelation is that of the role of media and communication for social change, inclusion and development. Considering the contemporary advancements in ICTs as well as the multidirectional developments in society, the potential of media contribution towards democratic processes constitutes a thriving area of research. In this light, the focus of this doctoral thesis, referred from now on as research, is media for social change and inclusion and it explores the particular case of the Roma communities in Albania.

The research is inspired by previous work on the Roma communities in Albania such as the political representation and engagement of Roma; the struggle for survival of Roma children in street situation; Roma youth empowerment through leadership and education and social service provision of Roma at local government level. A second source of inspiration is personal research interest on media and communication as well as previous research on media and democracy in post-communist countries; the regime of partisanship and objectivity of the press in times of election; media monitoring; populism and media; public service media in post-communism and new media platforms for social change. As a result of the professional and academic work on Roma communities on one side and the media on the other, the idea for this research project was conceived. Consequently the research has two main underlying themes: (i) the marginalisation of Roma communities in Albania; and (ii) the development and potentials of alternative media in the broader media landscape in Albania in the past decade.

Roma in Albania are recognized as an ethnic-linguistic minority. Unlike other ethnic groups, Roma communities do not have a particular historical homeland they can identify with, and therefore, no diplomatic representation or bilateral agreements to support them and promote long-term economic and cultural exchanges. There are no complete and accurate statistics regarding the number of the Roma population in Albania; however figures from independent sources (ERC, MRC) report from 12,000 to 140,000 Roma people in Albania and even up to 2,8% of the entire population. Most of the Roma are undocumented and unregistered, which makes it difficult to have a thorough mapping of this community across the country. Acknowledging the importance of a full Roma and Egyptian integration in the framework of the obligations set out in the Stability and Association Agreement with the EU, the Albanian government drafted a strategy for the economic and social integration of the Roma communities (Government of Albania, 2003).

In addition, in 2008 Albania became part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005 – 2015), a 10-year endeavor for their integration into the European mainstream societies. With the EU accession process, the conditions on the GoA to work towards the full integration of Roma are stronger as are higher the funds offered by various donors in this regard as it will be analyzed in Chapter VI. However, the impact of these strategies, policy interventions, programmes and civil society actions need to be critically assessed vis a vis the concrete contribution towards the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma.

Most of the Roma reside in urban and suburban areas of the cities. Some of the major problems faced relate to: (i) low level of education - low rates of registration in schools and the rapid spread of illiteracy within Roma; (ii) poverty and unemployment - many Roma families live below the poverty line and unemployment rates in the Roma communities are much higher compared to the rest of the population; (iii) extremely poor living conditions - many Roma families lack safe housing, sanitary conditions or supply of potable water; (iv) insufficient health services - some areas inhabited by Roma have no access to health service providers and/or the Roma population can not pay for health services or medicines. The general living conditions of the Roma are very similar in all regions where they are settled across the country. Many areas inhabited by the Roma are informal and do not have essential facilities such as sewage systems, waste removal services, supply with potable water, or proper road infrastructure while most of the dwellings are transitory, unsafe and unable to sustain weather changes.

Therefore, Roma communities in Albania face social, political and economic exclusion, negative perceptions from the mainstream society and thus are placed at the margins of the society. There is a lack of understanding and appreciation for their culture, values and lifestyles. The discourse in the public sphere in Albania regarding the Roma communities reinforces already existing aspects of their social deprivation, marginalization and discrimination. They are not represented in politics and decision-making processes and they lack communication mediums to make their voices heard. In this light, some of the key concerns here are: (i) lack of civic and political engagement and participation of Roma communities in policy making processes and public sphere in Albania; (ii) lack of understanding and sometimes negative connotations about the Roma communities culture, their language and the dynamics of their lifestyles; (iii) lack of intercultural understanding between the mainstream society and the marginalized groups such as the Roma in Albania; (iv) limited deliberation in the public sphere (media, academia, politics) about the existing and emerging issues about the Roma such as their civic and political engagement, participation and representation; (v) the need to improve the skills, competences and capacities of Roma communities and particularly young people.

The vast majority of policy programme, interventions and civil society actions have focused on issues such as education, socio-economic conditions and employment, housing and healthcare for Roma communities in Albania. While these represent the most pressing issues in order to address the multifaceted marginalisation of the Roma communities in

Albania, other dimensions of marginalisation are under-estimated and neglected, such as the discriminatory practices and settings towards Roma communities in the media landscape. This research will explore the media marginalisation of the Roma communities in Albania by addressing their communication rights and needs. This is not to say that media marginalisation has to be prioritised in research and/or policy and practice, rather it implies the relevance of this topic given that it relates to the sharing of power dynamics and decision-making in society. Communication rights and needs and media participation are paramount to the empowerment of marginalised communities as they relate to the ways in which power is distributed in society. As argued by (Carpentier, 2012: p. 164) “*the distribution of power in society is a dimension of the social that permeates every possible social field*”. Thus it is related to all the other pressing issues faced by the Roma communities in Albania such as health, housing, employment, education and overall social inclusion.

1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

The dominant approach in Albania has been that of refusing to acknowledge the existence of the ‘other different’ by claiming to be homogeneous society. In addition the main policy approaches have the normalisation approach and the integration one, which do not fully recognize the ‘other’ as a social actor. Drawing from the literature the principle merit of alternative media is the encouragement of the grassroots access to media as well as participation in media technology, content, people and organisation. The research focuses on community radio, as one example of alternative media. This is so because of its particular relevance in the case of the Roma communities in Albania considering the low literacy levels.

The research seeks to explore in what ways and to what extent, if at all, it can serve as a medium to improve community interrelations, distribute information and empower the community by creating alternative communication spaces. However, the research also looks into the drawbacks of community radio or other forms of alternative media, which can also be destructive if it is used for hatred speech and contents. Despite of the constraints of alternative media, it is considered as a basic democratic procedure to empower marginalised communities, encourage their self-management and the production of alternative formats and contents. Community radio as an alternative radio implies participation in technology, content, people and organisation.

Drawing from the above-mentioned concise analysis and research background, the central research aims are:

1. to explore the ways in which various forms of alternative media could contribute to countering marginalization and empowerment of marginalized communities such as Roma communities in Albania;

2. to elaborate a balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings that could allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media.

Consequently, the specific research objectives are:

- 1.1 to investigate the public service media landscape in Albania in terms of allowing for, or facilitating the participation and empowerment of marginalized community;
- 1.2 to analyse the current media usage and the communication needs of Roma communities in Albania;
- 1.3 to explore the potential and limits of alternative media in contributing towards the participation and empowerment of Roma;
- 2.1 to identify the challenges posed to the development of alternative media for marginalized community in Albania in terms of media content production, technology, distribution and organization;
- 2.2 to elaborate on media policy settings and values that will enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media towards social change and inclusion.

1.3 Research Questions and Hypothesis

The doctoral thesis poses two central research questions as follows:

1. In what ways and to what extent, if at all, alternative media contribute to countering marginalisation and empowerment of Roma communities in Albania?
2. How can a balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings be achieved in order to allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media?

Each of the central research question is then divided into sub-research questions to facilitate the research process, which are directly linked to the specific research objectives as presented in Table 1 & 2 below.

Table 1: First research aim, objectives & questions

Research Aim		Research question
1. to explore the ways in which various forms of alternative media could contribute to countering marginalization and empowerment of marginalized	→	1. In what ways and to what extent, if at all, alternative media contribute to countering marginalisation and empowerment of Roma community in Albania?
	↓	
Research Objectives		Sub-Research question
1.1 to investigate the public service media landscape in Albania in terms of allowing for, or facilitating the participation and empowerment of marginalized community;	→	1.1 To what extent does the public service media landscape in Albania allow or facilitates the participation and empowerment of the Roma community?
1.2 to analyse the current media usage and the communication needs of Roma community in Albania	→	1.2 What is the current media usage of the Roma community and what are their communication needs?
1.3 to explore the potentials and limits of alternative media in contributing towards the participation and empowerment of Roma	→	1.3 What are the potentials and limits of alternative media in contributing towards the participation and empowerment of Roma?

Table 2: Second research aim, objectives & questions

Research Aim		Research question
2. to elaborate a balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings that could allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media	→	2. How can a balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings be achieved in order to allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media?
	↓	
Research Objectives		Sub-Research question
2.1 to identify the challenges posed to the development of alternative media for marginalized community in Albania in terms of media content production, technology, distribution and organization;	→	2.1 What are the challenges posed to the development of alternative media for marginalized community in Albania: media content production, technology, distribution and organisation?
2.2 to elaborate on media policy settings and values that will enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media towards social change and inclusion	→	1.2 How can media policy settings and values enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media for social change and inclusion?

As this is a qualitative research, constructing a clear hypothesis as an expression of an expected correlation between two or more variables is very challenging. The research, nonetheless, poses as main arguments or hypotheses the following:

H1 *“Alternative media contribution to countering marginalisation of Roma communities in Albania is directly linked to participation and empowerment”*.

H2. *“The democratic and participatory potential of alternative media to empower Roma communities in Albania is though limited by contextual media settings and thus unable to fully challenge the exisiting dominant dicourses”*.

Figure 1 below points out the core concepts that underpin the entire research and that will be thoroughly explored in the conceptual framework in order to set them in relevant theoretical frames.

Figure 1: Core concepts in Hypothesis 1

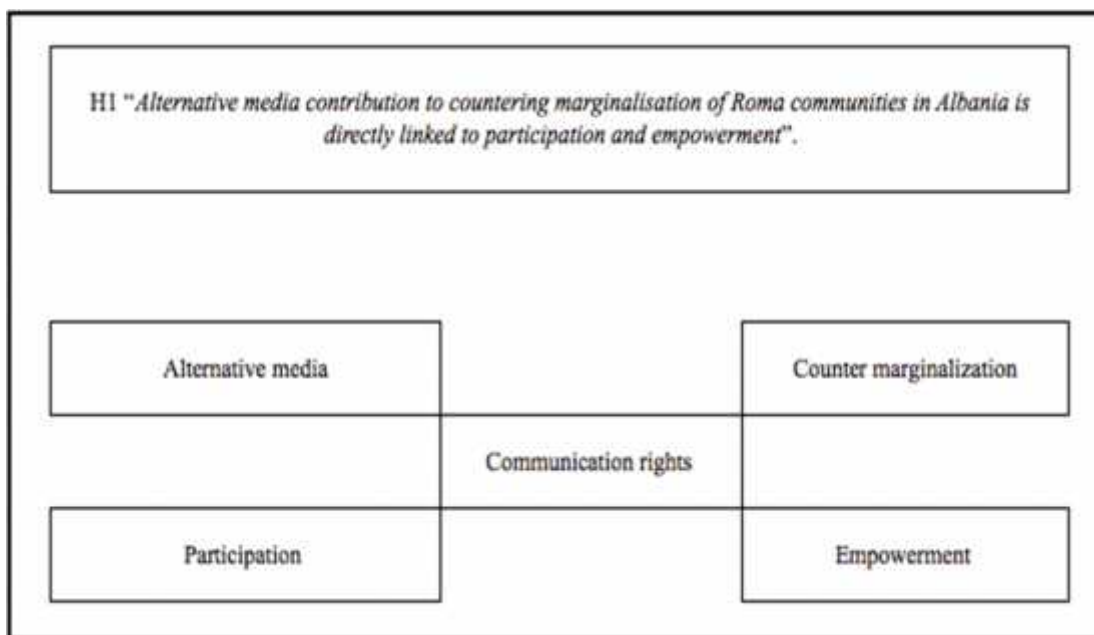
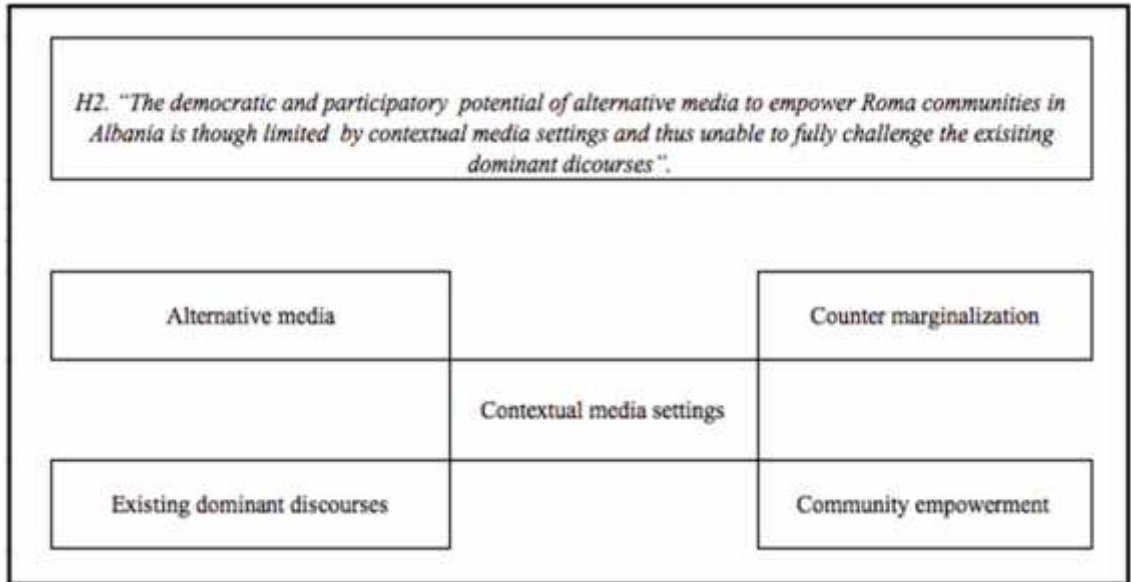


Figure 2: Core concepts in H2



1.4 Research Conceptual Framework

This research conceptual framework will be based on the following main pillars: first, the mainstream media and democracy. While there are many possible angles to view the relation between media and democracy, this research concentrates on the contemporary debates on the role of Public Service Media and their ‘duty of care’ for various minority groups and communities in society (Jacubowicz, 2006; Steemers, 2008; Bardoel & d’Haenens, 2008; Raboy, 2008). This then allows zooming in on the dominant discourses in the public sphere on the Roma communities, which brings us to the second main theoretical pillar, i.e. the limits of the public sphere and the potential of counter publics. This implies a reconsideration of the Habermas’ model of public sphere (Habermas, 1989) in lieu of the new context created by the potential of alternative media (Fraser, 1993; Benhabib, 1996; Calhoun, 1994; Mouffe, 2001). Third, the concept of alternative media and participation will be explored and grounded on relevant theoretical framework such as the democratic models (Atton, 2002; Couldry, 2003; Carpentier, 2007). Finally, the debate on the relation of alternative media with the media market and logic will be explored (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010), which enables to look into the challenges for the development of alternative media in terms of technology innovation, policy and sustainability.

First, the contemporary debates on Public Service Media (PSM) are explored based on its profound transformations in the past two decades. The main factors considered are: the liberalization of media markets; the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and socio-cultural changes in contemporary societies. Their

transformative impact is analyzed in terms of the principles of PSM and its role in society, i.e. remit and normative functions. The liberalization of media markets challenges PSM by prioritizing fair trade, competition, and commercial criteria in the marketplace over PSM core principles and role in society (Jacubowicz, 2006; Steemers, 2008). The core three principles of PSM being: (i) citizenship, i.e. enhancing, developing and serving social, political and cultural citizenship; (ii) universality, i.e. guaranteeing equal access; (iii) quality of services and content (Born & Prosser, 2001). These core principles are key to the claim for a ‘duty of care’ of the PSM towards minority groups and communities in society. In addition to media market liberalization and ICTs advancements, the profound transformations of PSM are taking place amid socio-cultural changes in contemporary societies. One of the main transformations is linked to the dichotomy of the viewers seen as consumers vs. citizens. As a result, media consumption has also changed with the decline of the television viewing and the increase in the use of new media platforms as sources of information, entertainment, and education, particularly by younger generations (Bardoel & d’Haenens, 2008; Raboy, 2008).

The concepts of public interest and common good as underpinning principles of the PSB remit have also been called into question. Three main normative functions have been associated traditionally with PSB: (i) from a political perspective, PSB serves the democratic processes through the objective, independent and impartial coverage of news and current affairs as well as high journalistic standards; (ii) from a cultural perspective, PSB produces high quality programming for entertainment as well as education; (iii) in terms of the social dimension, PSM promotes inclusion and diversity (Meier, 2003: p. 339). These normative functions are based on the principle that PSM has at its core the public interest and common good, rather than private and individual interests (McQuail, 1992: p. 42). Scholars have questioned the concept of public interest and common good as the core assets of the PSB. Hence, the concepts of ‘public interest’ and ‘common good’ are highly contested and subject to interpretation particularly when adopting them in different social, political and cultural contexts, which brings us then to the role of alternative media as spaces of various interests.

In light of such structural transformation, technological advancements, and increasing socio-cultural demands in contemporary digital society, the relevance of PSM could be maintained, but the functioning model has to be reviewed. PSM needs to reconsider their functions beyond the existing media and distribution modalities, i.e. audiovisual and digital, and work towards the development of “*coordinated multimedia strategy and synergy drawing from interactivity and networked modes such as information-based features, programme-based features such as on-demand services, fan-based features and game-based features*” (Bardoel & d’Haenens, 2008: p. 353). The shift towards PSM and application of multimedia strategies implies a crucial transformation in the relationship with audiences, including marginalized communities. Currently PSM is not only re-inventing itself as a media and communication medium in the broader sense, it is also

redefining its relations with “*the society it operates in and is mandated to serve*” (Nissen, 2006: p. 47). In this light, PSM must have a vast reach to the public; provide quality content and services that differ from the commercial media sector, audience-friendly; provide content and services to marginalized communities and specific small groups and expand onto a variety of individualized new media services.

A critical discourse analysis on narratives on marginalised communities, such as Roma in Albania, shows that the discourse in the public sphere (re)produces and reinforces already existing aspects of social deprivation, marginalization and discrimination. These dominant discourses are interrelated to these policy approaches: (i) correctional or repressive-oriented policy approach, which invites intervention programmes that tend to ‘normalise’ Roma; (ii) protective or rehabilitative policy approaches, i.e. emphasising Roma needs and aiming at protecting and re-integrating them in mainstream society (Phillips, 2008; Carpentier, 2007). This research draws from a critical stance on discourses about ‘normalisation’ and ‘integration’ of marginalised communities, which implies a reconsideration of the Habermas’ model of public sphere (Habermas, 1989) in lieu of the new context created by the potential of alternative media. The research argues that the concept of the public sphere is not adequate if we are to consider the role of alternative discourses in countering marginalisation and empowerment (Calhoun, 1994; Fraser, 1993).

The research assesses the public sphere model in terms of: identity and difference, discourse and the dichotomy public versus private, rationality and consensus in public deliberation. Therefore the research explores the potential of alternative media, such as a Community Radio, to producing counter discourses and constructing subaltern counter publics rather than ‘the public sphere’. The first difficulty to encounter when addressing such issues is that of the use of language. On one hand, the approach presented in this paper, building upon the work of Young (1990, 2002), Phillips (2008; 2009), Laclau and Mouffe (1999, 2001), is very critical of essentialist concepts of group identities. On the other hand, from a theoretical point of view, it is impossible to use a ‘neutral’, non-discriminatory language when referring to social and cultural groups. Thus this research acknowledges the difficulty of using an innocent and completely non-discriminatory language when referring to marginalized groups.

The research argues that even though the public sphere is a key concept for democratic theories and democratic political practice, the model elaborated by Habermas is conceptually flawed and it is not adequate when addressing issues of political representation of marginalized groups, for: (i) it presupposes a metaphor of sphere as an enclosed entity with internal symmetry; (ii) by considering individuals as fully formed in the private realm before entering the public sphere, it discounts the impact that discourse have in creating meanings and constituting identities; (iii) the separation between ‘public’ and ‘private’ has been part of a discourse of domination, which excludes certain issues from the arena of public deliberation, mostly those concerning marginalized groups; (iv) rationality and procedures of rational debate as are conceptually impossible. Habermas

does not consider that deliberation in public sphere may have other functions expect of reaching agreement; (v) power and conflict cannot be eliminated, for they are constitutive part of the 'political'.

Habermasian model of the public sphere is assessed from two main levels of normative criticism: for and against the Enlightenment paradigm. Even though Fraser (1993) and Benhabib (1996) follow the Enlightenment paradigm of rationality, it is worth mentioning two important critical points of their respective commentaries on Habermas - Fraser's critique on bracketing difference and Benhabib's critique on the dichotomy 'public' versus 'private' – which are significant for the discussion of political participation of marginalized groups. Mouffe's main point is that Habermasian model of public sphere and deliberative democracy is missing the dimension of the political and the relevance of passions and conflicts in politics, thus it is not able to offer a good understanding of democratic practices (Mouffe, 2001). In conclusion, the two levels of criticism deal with relevant issues for the discussion about political representation of marginalized groups such as: identity and difference, discourse and dichotomy public versus private, rationality and consensus in public deliberation.

The theory on alternative media stresses the democratic media potentials that can be realized by opening up access to media production to non-media professionals. The research will look into the theory on alternative media as developed by scholars such as Atton, 2002; Couldry, 2003; Carpentier, 2007; Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2010; Rodriguez, 2003. As such, the key task of alternative media is to challenge the highly concentrated media system and the resulting symbolic power of capitalist mass media by overcoming "the entrenched division of labour: producers of stories vs. consumer of stories"(Couldry, 2003, p. 45). Thus the emancipatory and progressive potential of alternative media lies in opening up access to media production to a broad public. This would allow challenging the mass media's power by confronting the reality constructed by capitalist mass media with other versions of social reality (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010).

Community media approaches focus on collective actors and the empowerment of individuals. Community media are understood as media that serve a specific geographic community or a community of interest, and allow non-professionals to actively engage in media production, organization and management (Coyer, 2007; Jankowski, 2003, p. 8; KEA, 2007, p. 1; Lewis, 1976, p. 61; Peissl and Tremetzberger, 2008, p. 3). Such participatory media approaches consider participation in processes of media production as well as in management processes as central defining feature of alternative media. A prominent scholar in this direction is Nico Carpentier, who refers to participation in the production process as content-related participation, whereas involvement in decision-making processes is termed structural participation (Carpentier, 2007, p. 88). Others prefer to use the term citizens' media. For instance Clemencia Rodriguez wants to illustrate that alternative media can assist those who are engaged in their production in becoming active citizens (Rodriguez, 2003, p. 190). Another important representative of the participatory

media approach is Chris Atton. He argues that alternative media should anticipate the idea of a society beyond capitalism in the present. In this context he speaks of “prefigurative politics”, which in his view cannot be realized primarily on the media content level, but by alternative, anti-capitalist, and participatory organization practices (Atton, 2002, p. 21).

Critiques such as Sandoval and Fuchs (2010) warn against the democratic potential of alternative media. They argue that so far alternative media theory has stressed too much the participatory media approaches. While they agree that participation can have positive effects on those who are engaged in participatory production processes (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010: p. 145), they doubt that alternative media can effectively challenge corporate media power and dominant discourse by simply realizing participatory production processes. They propose the conceptualization of alternative media as critical media, which draws from a “*dialectical understanding of the media system, on the assumption of a dialectical relationship between media actors (producers and recipients) and media structures, such as economic product form, media content, media technologies, media institutions, etc.*” (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010: p. 144). John Downing speaks of alternative media as radical media that “*express an alternative vision to hegemonic politics, priorities and perspectives*” (Downing, 2001, p. v). For Downing too, radical media need not necessarily be participatory media. Also Tim O’Sullivan has given a definition of alternative media that is more oriented on political projects rather than on participatory interaction. He describes alternative media as “*forms of media communication that avowedly reject or challenge established and institutional politics, in the sense that they all advocate change in society, or at least a critical reassessment of traditional values*” (O’Sullivan, 1994, p. 10). Although these accounts have merits when considering alternative media, this research is not primarily interested in the political struggles of the left vs the right or anti-capitalist movement and as such the participatory approach to alternative media resonates most with the scope of the research.

The research dwells in depth on the various conceptualizations of alternative media by considering merits and limits. The final approach taken is in debt with the conceptualization of alternative media as put forward by Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2010) and Carpentier (2012) of alternative media with participation as the core characteristic. The key dimension of alternative media is that of participation. Participation remains a widely used concept in various disciplines, including communication and media studies. It is first and foremost related to democratic theory and it implies both the political process and the importance of the embedded concept of power. In order to make use of the concept of participation in relation to alternative media, it is necessary to transcend from institutionalised politics towards all realms of society, which in turn allows for the identification of the key characteristics of participation (Carpentier, 2012). The research zooms in on the concept of media participation and it differentiates between access to media, interaction with media and participation in media. The discussion of access, interaction and participation leads then to the issue of sustainability of alternative media

and the strategies for their development.

Forces coming from information and communication technological innovation, changes in media policy landscapes and the liberalization of markets have created pressures for shifting media ownership from public to private, and now to citizen producers as ‘user generated content’ (Beckett, 2008; Cammaerts, 2005; Carpentier, 2009). These transformations pose significant challenges to media policy and regulatory framework as well as to the functions and operations of responsible institutions. The development of alternative media is enabled by such changes, but also challenged. This survey of literature will consider: (i) whether the values that are privileged in media policy and regulatory decisions in Albania allow for, or facilitate the participation by all interested stakeholders – state, private, and civil society and in both national and local level, and thus contribute to democratization; (ii) finding a balance between technological innovation, media policy and regulatory forces in order to create an enabling environment - national and/or local - for new media to impact democratization, for alternative media to counter marginalisation and thus to shift from simple access to participation and empowerment; (iii) whether a purely alternative media can be self-sustainable or should it make compromises for the sake of survival. These dimensions, i.e. participation, enabling media environment and sustainability of media are essential to the quality of alternative media for empowerment.

1.5 Overview of Research Methodology and Design

This research relies on a qualitative methodology of primary and secondary data. The research project included two main research phases, i.e. desk research and field work. The first phases included the literature review, the development of the conceptual framework on alternative media and marginalisation as well as the review of policy documents in place in Albania regarding the Roma communities. The fieldwork refers to the collection of the primary data through the use of in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders and focus groups with Roma communities. The data gathered was then interpreted through critical discourse analysis. The sample of the research project was 8 in-depth interviews with representatives of Roma NGOs, international as well as government organisations in order to explore the intervention programmes and strategies on Roma communication channels; 10 in-depth interviews with media stakeholders; and 48 documents analysed through document analysis. In addition, 3 focus groups with a total of 33 participations with Roma and non-Roma NGOs working with marginalised groups were organised in order to assess and understand the needs of the Roma communities in regards to developing their own medium of expression and communication channel.

1.6 Research Relevance and Contribution

Conducting research on alternative media in Albania is highly relevant as Albania lacks an established scholarly tradition of media and communication studies with a focus on alternative media. In the past decade, some systematic research has been conducted regarding the relationship between mainstream media and politics with a particular focus on political communication, media ownership and business pressure and policy on audio-visual media system. However, there is relatively limited research on the development of alternative media in Albania and their implications for participation and empowerment of marginalised communities. What is more, this research project is highly relevant as it tackles some of the major priorities regarding the situation of Roma communities in Albania and it seeks to involve Roma NGOs, individuals and other actors on social inclusion and human rights. The recommendations of the research will be distributed to relevant stakeholders in a time when the national strategies and policy framework on social inclusion are being re-designed for the period 2014-2020. Findings of the research will add to the knowledge and understanding of the merits and limits of alternative media to counter marginalization and empower Roma communities and in Albania. This research contributes thus to the media and communication scholarly field in Albania in the sense that it does:

- (i) provide systematic and thorough research on the limits and merits of alternative media in a context whereby there is very limited prior research;
- (ii) support and enrich alternative media theory with an in-depth case study from a relatively under-explored region in media and communication studies for social change and development such as the South Eastern Europe region;
- (iii) provide useful knowledge to relevant stakeholders regarding the future development of alternative media to foster social inclusion;
- (iv) provide strategies and instruments to Roma communities activities, Roma NGOs and other stakeholders working with Roma in Albania and elsewhere on how to employ alternative media for empowerment.

1.7 Research Thesis Structure

In addition to the introductory chapter, the research thesis is organized in four main parts and each of them is divided in chapter, sections and sub-sections: (i) theory; (ii) methodology; (iii) context; and (iv) findings and analysis. The first part constitutes the theoretical framework and is divided in two main chapters: Chapter II looks into the theoretical framework on mainstream media and democracy with a focus on the role of public service media in addressing the communication rights and needs of minority groups such as marginalised communities. This Chapter has three sections: one dealing with the current debates of public service media and how this relates to the fulfilment of their normative function of providing communicative platform(s) for diverse groups in society.

This section explores the contemporary debates on PSM as well as the particular developments and challenges of PSM in emerging democracies or post-communist countries such as the case of Albania. The discussion on the normative functions of PSM leads then to second section, i.e. the elaboration of the representation of the ‘otherness’ in mainstream media, both commercial and public, but primarily in PSM as most relevant to the research scope of media for social inclusion. This offers the theoretical background for the exploration of the underpinning reasons behind the coverage of the Roma communities in mainstream media. Third, the contemporary developments in media landscape with the advancements of ICTs are discussed also in Chapter II in order to look at the new media and set the ground for moving on to the discussion on alternative media.

Within the first part of the research thesis, Chapter III concentrates on the alternative media theoretical framework. The first section explores the concept of public sphere in relation to questions of multiculturalism and social inclusion and its relevance regarding the discussion on participatory media settings. Secondly, the alternative media theory will be analysed as well as its criticism. The third section of this chapter will explore the concepts of participation and will provide the analytical and conceptual frame for the research based on participation as the core dimension of alternative media. The final section of Chapter III looks into the empowerment issue and the potential of marginalised communities to ‘make their own media’. It also explores the limits and challenges of the alternative media in terms of policy, technology and sustainability.

The second part of the research thesis is that of methodology and it contains Chapter IV, which is structured as follows: first, the research methodology approach and why critical discourse analysis is the appropriate approach; second, the research design, methods and instruments; third, research challenges, merits and limitations.

Part III of the research thesis focuses on the context of the research. The subsequent Chapter VI sets the context in relation to the Roma communities in Albania by providing an overview of their situation in terms of social inclusion, policy on education, employment, health and housing as well as participation and political representation. The contextual background on Roma communities serves to understand the community better, but also to set their communication rights and needs into the concrete perspective of their reality.

The third part entails the findings, analysis and discussions and is structured as per the research aim and research questions. Chapter VI addresses the positioning of alternative media by examining them in a relational status vis a vis mainstream media and dominant policy discourses. This chapter also highlights the heterogeneity of Roma communities. Chapter VII addresses the potential contribution of alternative media by analysing the following: first, exploring the media usage of the Roma communities and their communication needs, second, analysing the features of alternative media platforms for Roma communities and their categorization as alternative; and third, by identifying merits and limits of alternative media to counter marginalisation and empowerment. Chapter VIII

tackles the second research question on a possible balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings in order to allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media. Chapter VIII has two sections: one on the challenges posed to the development of alternative media for marginalized communities in Albania in terms of media content production, technology, distribution and organization and the second on media policy settings and values that will enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media towards social inclusion.

The final Chapter IX sets the findings into the conceptual framework and provides the concluding remarks of the thesis as well as recommendation on strategies for the development of alternative media and suggestions for future research. Annexes follow with more details from fieldwork as well as a complete bibliography for the research.

1.8 Chapter Concluding Remarks

This chapter offered the introduction to the research thesis by setting the research background, stating the problem and identifying the research aim and objectives. This chapter also presented the research question and hypothesis as well as a brief overview of the conceptual framework and methodology. The structure of the research was then outlined in details to facilitate the flow of the reading.

PART I - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The first part constitutes the theoretical framework and is divided in two main chapters:

Chapter II looks into the theoretical framework on mainstream media and democracy with a focus on the role of public service media in addressing the communication rights and needs of minority groups such as marginalised communities. This Chapter has three sections: one dealing with the current debates of public service media and how this relates to the fulfilment of their normative function of providing communicative platform(s) for diverse groups in society. This section explores the contemporary debates on PSM as well as the particular developments and challenges of PSM in emerging democracies or post-communist countries such as the case of Albania. The discussion on the normative functions of PSM leads then to second section, i.e. the elaboration of the representation of the ‘otherness’ in mainstream media, both commercial and public, but primarily in PSM as most relevant to the research scope of media for social inclusion. This offers the theoretical background for the exploration of the underpinning reasons behind the coverage of the Roma communities in mainstream media.

Chapter III concentrates on the alternative media theoretical framework. The first section explores the concept of public sphere in relation to questions of multiculturalism and social inclusion and its relevance regarding the discussion on participatory media settings. Secondly, the alternative media theory will be analysed as well as its criticism. The third section of this chapter will explore the concepts of participation and will provide the analytical and conceptual frame for the research based on participation as the core dimension of alternative media. The final section of Chapter III looks into the empowerment issue and the potential of marginalised communities to ‘make their own media’. It also explores the limits and challenges of the alternative media in terms of policy, technology and sustainability.

CHAPTER II - MAINSTREAM MEDIA AND DEMOCRACY: UNIVERSALITY, DIVERSITY AND QUALITY

2.1 Contemporary Debates on Public Service Media: Re-inventing its Remit

The contemporary debates on Public Service Media (PSM) will be explored based on the profound transformations of PSM in the past two decades. The main factors explored are: the liberalization of media markets; the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and socio-cultural changes in contemporary societies. The analysis focuses on the principles of PSM and its role in society, remit as well as normative functions. First, the liberalization of media markets challenges PSB by prioritizing fair trade, competition, and commercial criteria in the marketplace over PSM core principles and democratic role in society. The core three principles of PSB are: (i) citizenship, i.e. enhancing, developing and serving social, political and cultural citizenship; (ii) universality, i.e. guaranteeing equal access; (iii) quality of services and content (Born & Prosser, 2001: p. 671). The liberalization of media markets has challenged PSM to move more towards the commercial activities and thus risking to make the normative basis of PSB subordinate to the economic and commercial criteria of the market logic.

This poses a threat to the provision of PSM for diverse communities in society, as the market logic will prevail over social inclusion principles. Scholars argue that for PSM to keep up to its principles of citizenship, universality and quality of services and content it needs to overcome the dichotomy of broadcasting as a commercial activity vs. as an expression of citizenship and culture (Harrison & Wessels, 2005; Razanova, 2007). This implies developing effective principles that put the normative basis of PSB as primary compared to the competition and market processes. As Born and Prosser put it “*PSB plays a central role in social and cultural development that underlie the general conditions of citizenship and thus PSB is prior to the market, not just part of it*” (Born & Prosser, 2001: p. 659). The conceptualization of PSM as a public good underpins the primacy of its principles and role in society compared to market processes. This also legitimizes state intervention.

However, the state intervention in public service media has come under scrutiny from different perspectives, including the right and left sides of the political spectrum. The most significant criticism of state intervention comes from the neoliberal spectrum and relates to the distortion of the media market due to the state aid for PSM (Harrison & Wessel, 2005: p. 847). The argument is that state intervention in subsidizing PSM constitutes a potential distortion of the media free market and fair competition. From the left, PSM has been criticized as a potential hegemonic tool for ideological control by the state. It is argued that the state may not necessarily serve the public interest of all diverse communities in society as it is mainly concerned with the interests of the most powerful

elite and the capital (Rozanova, 2007: p. 131). This might be particularly relevant in the case of new emerging democracies where rule of law is weak, corruption is persistent and human rights violated. As such the PSM can and has been reduced from an instrument of democracy to an instrument of the state, thus failing short of meeting its normative principle of citizenship, universality and quality of services and content.

The remit of PSM has come under question regarding its relevance in the digital area in line with the other transformative processes mentioned above. Traditionally, the public service remit is based on the following principles: (i) a commitment to universal service; (ii) diversity and representativeness of content in political, social and cultural terms; (iii) democratic accountability; (iv) transparency and public financing; (v) non-profit goals (McQuail, 1992: pp. 49-64). The reformulation of the PSM remit requires that it embraces the challenges and opportunities offered by the ICTs and at the same time maintaining some key underpinning preconditions such as: all new formats and services generated by the use of ICTs in PSM shall contribute to the attainment of the core PSM remit; they shall be linked to the principal activities of the broadcasting and most importantly, PSM core functions shall not be cannibalized by the new formats and services offered by digitalization. Consequently, as with commercial media, issues such as information availability and a plurality of communication modalities as well as programme portfolio diversification to appeal to mass audiences have become relevant for PSM too (Bardoel & d'Haenens, 2007: p. 353), thus questioning their commitment to offering communicative space for diverse communities.

The concepts of public interest and common good as underpinning principles of the PSB remit have also been called into question. Three main normative functions have been associated traditionally with PSM: (i) from a political perspective, PSB serves the democratic processes through the objective, independent and impartial coverage of news and current affairs as well as high journalistic standards; (ii) from a cultural perspective, PSM produces high quality programming for entertainment as well as education; (iii) in terms of the social dimension, PSM promotes inclusion and diversity (Meier, 20013: p. 339). PSM can also be related to principles such as: the contribution in pursuing democratic purposes through transparency and accountability working practices, fairness and promotion of diversity in the public realm; the contribution to a balanced media system amid an increasing commercial media landscape; facilitation of dialogue and participation of citizens; promotion of democratic values such as citizenship and civil society; public ownership and independence as well as objectivity regime and impartiality (Barwise & Picard, 2012: p. 2). These normative functions are based on the principle that public service broadcasting has at its core the public interest and common good, rather than private and individual interests (McQuail, 1992: p. 42). Scholars have questioned the concept of public interest and common good as the core assets of the PSM and thus opening up the media settings for a variety of media modalities to serve diverse communities.

It has been argued that the traditional PSM remit and objectives are in fact limited

by particular institutional structures, management and ownership models and therefore do not necessarily fulfill their remit and principles (Harrison & Wessels, 2005: p. 847). This is related to the emergence of new media communication (formats, channels, technologies), which can offer traditional public service values such as universal access, the provision of free-to-air services, plurality of content and suppliers. In terms of technological advancements, the digitalization process implies more information availability and a plurality of communication modalities, which are interactive, networked, persistent, ubiquitous and instant (Jakubowicz, 2006: p. 21-24). What we witness today is a process of convergence, which refers to the blurring of the conventional boundaries between ‘old’ and ‘new’ media and which began in the 1980s with the emergence of cable and satellite, teletext and videotext systems and is currently ubiquitous to the reality of everyday life from politics to media consumption (Bardoel & d’Haenens, 2007: p. 353). What is more, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the implementation of networked ICTs and introduction of social online media has given rise to the production of multimedia programming and publishing of content available to all everyone with online access.

In addition to media market liberalization and ICTs advancements, the profound transformations of PSM are taking place amid socio-cultural changes in contemporary societies in Europe and elsewhere. One of the main transformations is linked to the dichotomy of the viewers seen as consumers vs. citizens. This entails a conceptualization of the viewers: *“as sovereign consumer making a choice from a range of services offered by the marketplace, or as a citizen participating in a culture serving the purpose of his or her self-development as well as that of the society of which the citizen is a member”* (2007: p. 657). PSB has traditionally been meant to foster citizenry. However, the programming and content of media has been affected by the blurring of the clear-cut distinction between citizens and consumers or of elite and popular culture. As a result, media consumption has also changed with the decline of the television viewing and the increase in the use of new media platforms as sources of information, entertainment, and education, particularly by younger generations Bardoel & d’Haenens, 2007: p. 353. As a consequence, the differences in audiovisual media will tend to disappear, which then leads to the discussion on new media.

This implies for PSM to embrace digital convergence and not ignoring the market, but within that market to treat PSM as an institution in its own right (Van den Bulck, 2008: p. 346). In this account, the transformation of PSM seems to be a significant safeguard of a healthy media landscape, whereby both public and private media outlets are crucial rather than pure commercial media. PSM can compensate potential market failure and produce public value through independent journalism and public service remit as reformulated in the digital area and new social context. PSM needs to reconsider their functions beyond the existing media and distribution modalities, i.e. audiovisual and digital, and work towards the development of *“coordinated multimedia strategy and synergy drawing from interactivity and networked modes such as information-based features, programme-based*

features such as on-demand services, fan-based features and game-based features” (Bardoel & D’Haenens, 2007 :p. 357).

The shift towards PSM and application of multimedia strategies implies a crucial transformation in the relationship with audiences. The major challenge for PSM in a multimedia context is the transformation of its relationship with the audience from passive viewers of pre-produced programmes into active users. PSM might foster interactivity and networked modalities offered by ICTs and citizen-generated content (Jakubowicz, 2006: p. 17). For PSM the editorial function of public service broadcasting should be maintained as it is a crucial function in achieving the PSM remit of sustaining citizenship and enhancing debate in the public sphere. Democratization, improved living standards, education, market liberalization and advances in ICTs have eroded the traditional relationship of PSM to its audience, i.e. the unequal, asymmetrical relations between the audience on the one hand, and broadcasters, cultural elite and the state on the other legitimated by social divisions and stratification. Therefore, the legitimate arguments for the transformation of PSM claim that a new partnership between PSM and the public shall be developed which will allow PSM to acknowledge the role of the public as an active partner, and no longer just passive receiver; to reconnect with the public in ways suited to the 21st century and to make public media truly public (Jakubowicz, 2006). Despite the practical challenges of achieving this aim, this new partnership with the public will fully democratize PSM and bring it in harmony with social trends.

2.2 Public Service Media in New Democracies: More than Re-invention of its Remit

The role of the PSM in new democracies such as the Western Balkans and particularly Albania in regards to diversity and inclusion is much more complex than in the media contexts with an established public service media tradition. Thus the PSM in this case will be analyzed by considering the media changes; models of transformation of media systems and the specific challenges faced by PSM in its transformation from state-controlled to public service. The underlying analytical framework is that the countries in WB have experienced multifaceted, deep and even controversial transformations since the fall of the communist regime and the media system is no exception to that. Scholars (Jakubowicz, 2006; Voltmer, 2013) have identified eight clusters of contemporary processes of change in media systems in new democracies¹, which will be used as dimensions of analysis for the media landscape in WB and particularly Albania in the following sections.

- a) *De-monopolization and partial re-monopolization*, i.e. the old media system was fragmented and replaced by a market-oriented system that quickly started to integrate into the international media market with a trend of concentration of local

¹ The research will use the term ‘new democracies’ to avoid the potential negative connotations of ‘post-communist countries’.

media market, thus the shift from the initial de-monopolization towards new ways of monopolization of media system;

- b) *Commercialization and marketization of media systems*, i.e. with the advancement of transformations in post-communist countries, the market is shaping more and more the media system with tabloidization of all media being a central pattern;
- c) *Media freedom and independence*, in the initial phase the media freedom and independence were celebrated as crucial for democratization, but new political elites have sought to apply various techniques to control the media and to curb their independence and autonomy. Self-censorship is also a major issue in media system in new democracies, which will be elaborated in the next chapters.
- d) *Democratization of media systems*, i.e. democratization of media as organization in the sense of making the media, their ownership, management and content more democratic and socially representative. This is the case mainly with alternative and radical media, which will be discussed here.
- e) *Pluralization and diversity in the media*, in post-communist a plurality of media outlets representing various groups and interests can be noted in the media system as a whole, whereas media outlet, when analyzed separately, often suffer from lack of diversity of perspectives.
- f) *Professionalization of journalists* has been transformed from watchdogs (holding the government accountable), through lapdogs (serving the government and political parties) to attack dogs (tabloidization and sensational news) due to the fact that the government, political organizations or business interests simply control the media and their contents.
- g) *Public Service Broadcasting/Media* and its future development. The commercialization and marketization of media is one of the dominant patterns of media system change in new democracies.
- h) *Internationalization and globalization*; media system internationalization has political, economic and cultural dimensions, so its direction and pace are naturally influenced by the circumstances prevailing in each country (Jakubowicz, 2006; Voltmer, 2013).

In the past twenty-five years, new democracies² in WB have witnessed various conflicts centered on the media whereby media has either been the victim or the predator or both (Rupnik & Zielonka, 2013: p. 16). What is disadvantageous to democratic processes in the region is not only that both political and business elite asserts control over the media, but also that the media are an active and powerful actor seeking financial gains and

² There are three main pathways of democratization: from communism to democracy in Eastern Europe; from military dictatorship in Latin America and from one party dictatorship in Asia and Africa. See Katrin Voltmer, *The Media in Transitional Democracies*. (2013), Cambridge: Polity. This research paper uses the term 'new democracies' to refer to the path of Eastern Europe, including Western Balkan countries: Albania, Serbia, BiH, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. It is not part of the scope of this paper to discuss the democratization path per se.

political influence (Rupnik & Zielonka, 2013: p. 17). In addition to media aligning with businesses and political actors, the weakness of civil society has left not only the government, but also the media without public scrutiny and thus no pressure for accountability, responsibility and transparency. It is thus argued for a circular model of media change whereby media and politics and business have a multi-way interaction and power relations. The initial phases of media change were similar to new democracies, i.e. liberalisation and deregulation (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2000: p. 8). The future path of media system change in WB as in other new democracies is highly depended upon the contextual circumstances in each country, i.e. political, economic and socio-cultural factors.

Drawing from the premise that the social and cultural factors have played an even greater role in the media system change in new democracies, media policies have pursued combined elements of the mimetic and atavistic orientation depending on the level democratic consolidation. Scholars have identified three media policy orientations presented in the new media systems in new democracies: *idealistic*, *mimetic* and *atavistic* (Jakubowicz, 2004: p. 53). *Idealistic* policy orientation is based on a radical vision of direct, participatory communicative democracy. This approach is deemed as idealistic as it aimed at creating a media systems based on the values of equality, justice and solidarity and with a critical role of journalists (McQuail, 1992: p. 66-67; Nordenstreng, 1997). *Mimetic* policy orientation that aims at the juxtaposition of the media system in new democracies with that of 'the West', i.e. liberalization of the print media and a free press and the establishment of a balanced dual broadcasting system.

The 'mimetic' orientation concentrated on the standards of the public service phase of the media policy development in Western Europe so as to transplant those standards in the process of reformation of the media system in new democracies. The attempt to apply such standards such as social responsibility of free press, a guardianship role for the media are very challenging in a different socio-cultural, political and economic context (McQuail, 2000; Jakubowicz, 2004). *Atavistic* orientation refers to the unwillingness of new power elites to give up all control of, or ability to influence, the media (Jakubowicz, 2008: p. 110). Scholars (Jakubowicz, 2004; Voltmer, 2013) argue that the colonization of public life by political parties and lack of a genuine civil society that occurred in new democracies have led to the atavistic orientation of media policy. The analysis of media landscape in Albania shall be explored in the light of the combination between the mimetic and atavistic policy orientation.

The seminal comparative framework developed by Hallin and Mancini will be used to analyse media systems in Albania. As argued by Jakubowicz, the media system in new democracies as in WB can be categorized under the 'Mediterranean' model of Hallin and Mancini typology of media systems with these main features:

- An elite-oriented press with relatively small circulation and a corresponding centrality of electronic media;
- High political parallelism, with the press marked by a strong focus on political life

and a tradition of advocacy journalism, and with public service broadcasting tending to follow government or parliamentary models;

- Low development of the professionalization of journalists, with journalism not very distinct from political activism;
- Strong role of the state in the media as an owner, regulator and funder of the media (Hallin and Mancini, 2004: 73).

The use of the typology of media systems as introduced by Hallin and Mancini can be justified by the argument that “*some of the problems presently found in post-communist countries are shared by many democratic media systems, including those in countries with sustained, or at least significantly longer, democratic institutions and traditions*” (Jakubowicz, 2008: p. 101). The aim is not only to position new democracies media systems in Hallin and Mancini’s media typology, but to explore their problems, similarities, features and the rationales behind prior to the analysis of alternative media.

Drawing from the shortcomings of positioning the media systems of new democracies in one of the typology developed for ‘the West’, a new *hybrid media system* has been identified as a normative and empirical framework of analysis. Even though commercialization and political parallelism are similar phenomena, Voltmer argues that the western models of media system cannot be easily applied to new democracies. Thus it is not entirely accurate to position them in one of Hallin and Mancini’s media typology. Voltmer (2008: p. 23) points out that new *hybrid media systems* have emerged in new democracies that blend together liberal ideas of a free and de-regulated press with trajectories of the communist past, contextual local values and the experience of transition and democratization. It is paramount to note that there is no ‘good overall’ model for the new media systems in emerging democracies as their specific configuration depends on the interaction between contextual socio-cultural, economic and political factors. What is more, Sükösd and Bajomi-Lázár (2003: p. 15) argue that there is no final state of media reformation in post-communist countries like an end point of the Western institutional pattern. Similar to democratization itself, the transformation and reformation of media remains an open-ended, normatively oriented attempt. PSB in the region and in Albania will thus be examined in line with this approach.

The introduction of PSM in post-communist countries is so “*extraordinarily difficult to achieve that it could be regarded as a true test of post-Communist transformation overall, specifically in terms of the consolidation of democracy*” (Sparks, 1998: p. 101). First, the introduction of PSM came after the commercial stations appeared in most new democracies media system and consequently, PSM was competing in a fierce market while at the same time trying to establish itself. Second, high levels of political parallelism results in politicization of content, management and staff and thus this means that restructuring and managerial reform of PSM could not in reality be carried through. A key common feature for PSM in new democracies in Western Balkans is “systemic parallelism”, which means that a country’s system of government is translated into a

corresponding system of PSB governance (example “politics-over-broadcasting”, “politics-in-broadcasting”) (Sparks, 1998: p. 101). Third, the newly introduced PSM did not have appropriate time and conditions for institutional, professional and cultural changes (independence, impartiality, detachment from politics, dedication to public interest, commitment to quality) that would allow PSB to consolidate in the media landscape. In addition, the commercial media sector is not interested in the development of PSM and also the concentration in private markets impacts the media policy. Also, the cost of maintaining PSM in countries with small population and low GDP per capita is high. In this light, in new democracies one of the major themes of discussions about PSB is privatization.

The attempt to introduce and maintain PSM in new democracies in the WB seems to be pushed forward by the European integration processes. If the support for PSB weakens in EU this will imply that one of the strong incentives for introducing PSB in WB would be gone (Jakubowicz, 2004: p. 66). However, transformation and consolidation of PSB and media systems in new democracies in WB should not be pursued in the name of EU integration, but as *“raison d’etre of their own which for the media means professionalization based on shared standards of journalism and media roles”* (Jakubowicz, 2004: p. 65). Jakubowicz argues that the *“the overall result of this combination of circumstances could be called a lack of social embeddedness of PSB in post-Communist countries, depriving it of its natural social habitat and cultural context”* (Jakubowicz, 2004: p. 65). In this vein, the PSM subordination to or independence from the governmental and political parties in new democracies depends on the degree of the consolidation of democracy (including all pillars of democratization such as rule of law, check and balances, human rights etc.) and political culture.

2.3 Public Service Media and Marginalised Communities: Representation of the ‘Otherness’

Media can refer not only to the print media, electronic media (radio and television), the new media (social networking and the Internet), but also to literature, art and cinematography. In the liberal media tradition, media’s main normative roles in society are: (i) to inform citizens and the diverse interest groups in society with “objective” information; (ii) to exercise critical surveillance over the activities of the government; (iii) to stimulate an arena of meaningful and quality public debate on politics which will affect society; and (iv) to serve as platforms of access for groups and politicians to put their positions forward, as well as educational and cultural tools for citizens to have knowledge about their nation and the world (Blumer & Gurevitch, 1995: p. 97). The principal role of the media seems to be implicit, i.e. media provide the conceptual framework in which information is located and media set the agenda of the issues and topics to be discussed in the public sphere (Lichtenberg, 1990: p. 23). The ability of the media to define a certain

conceptual framework and to set the agenda of discussion is particularly relevant in the case of media representation and marginalised communities. In addition, media are considered to be very important means of influencing, structuring and shaping public opinion and citizens' attitudes and behaviours (Gunther & Mughan, 2000: p. 3). The media impact in shaping and influencing public opinion is also very significant in the case of media representation of marginalised minorities as individuals are shaped and their attitudes are influenced by the media representation of reality.

Another aspect of media, which is related to the discussion of media representation of marginalised communities, is the use of language and symbolic power. Media do not exist in a social vacuum; on the contrary media are part of certain social and cultural contexts as well as political, historical and economic landscapes. As a result power relations are a constitutive part of it as well as conflict, passion and antagonism (Bourdieu, 1998: p. 22). Media's symbolic power is reflected in their ability to produce representations and to construct social reality through language and discourse. In the light of media symbolic power Bourdieu argues that '*television does not record reality, it creates the reality*' (Bourdieu, 1998: p. 22). Bourdieu's work on language and media as symbolic power is very interesting when one considers the ways in which narratives for marginalised communities are created through media representation. Bourdieu (1991) moves from a semiotic analysis of language, which focuses on the internal constitution of language structure to an approach that concentrated on social, cultural or historical conditions. Drawing from this line of criticism of the semiotic analysis of language, this research adopts a constructionist approach to meaning and language in media texts and content, which argues that we construct meaning using representational systems – concepts and signs (Hall, 1997: p. 25).

Media are the mediums or the means by which ideas, project, concepts, feelings, images and political programs and so on are represented through language, whether being sounds, written words, images or objects (Hall, 1997: p. 225). This is why the media use of language is crucial in the production, circulation and reproduction of meanings, perspectives and viewpoints about the world, the other and the self. Drawing from the work of Wittgenstein (1953) in the philosophy of language, one may argue that social, cultural and political identities are constructed by language, i.e. by the production and circulation of meanings. Wittgenstein (1953) considered language as a '*form of life: it is what we do, what we are, how we behave that gives meaning to the language*' (Wittgenstein, 1953: p. 11). When considering media representation and marginalised communities, i.e. social inclusion, in terms of media relationships to audiences, it is critical to take into consideration that '*things in themselves rarely if ever have anyone, single, fixed and unchanging meaning*' (Hall, 1997: p. 3). It is through cultural practices in certain contexts that we give meaning to things including media texts and content or, in Wittgenstein's term, meanings rest upon '*forms of life*' (Wittgenstein, 1953: p. 11). It is paramount to

acknowledge the diversity of meanings and different ways of interpreting the world based on different individuals and their particular contexts.

Another way of considering media relationships to their audiences in terms of body image is through the concept of the 'Other', which is very important in the constitution of individual and identities. Taking as a starting point the psychoanalytic approaches to the constitution of the *I*, one may draw similarities with the ways in which identities and collective identities are constructed through language and discourse in media texts, content and image. Lacan (1966), who developed further more Freud's psychoanalysis, pointed out that the role of the other is crucial in identity formation. Lacan (1966) emphasizes the role of the 'other' in constituting individual identity through what he refers to as the '*mirror stage*' (Lacan 1996, 6). The mirror stage is a process of identification, the child is able to constitute the *I* through the presence of the 'other' (the mother) (Lacan, 1966: pp. 2-6). The mirror stage is conditioned on the child's first recognition of a distinction between itself and the (m)other, thus the ego is partially a consequence of socially structured psychological relations between itself, the others and its body image (Grosz, 1990: p. 32). This psychoanalytic perspective is relevant to our discussion about the representation of beauty in media and the body image, which is created through media images.

Media and audiences are conceptualized in terms of reception, relationships and impacts. The media audience research has developed since the 1980s and has attempted to incorporate both emphases on media texts and on audiences. Hall (1980) introduced the paired concepts of encoding and decoding in an attempt to link texts and audiences. He argued for cultural studies to examine the ways in which the understanding and misunderstandings in communicative exchange depend on the relationship between encoder/producer and decoder/receiver (Hall, 1980: p. 131). However, it is important to note that audiences may have different approaches to media texts and content thus having selective responses to media (Livingstone, 1998: p. 237). The audiences are not just passive receptive of media content, they may be active as well as resistance and critical to media texts and content. The concept of the autonomy of active audiences opposes the claims for cultural hegemony (Livingston, 1998: p. 238). A post structuralist approach to media and audiences focuses on '*the role of the reader*' (Eco, 1979 as quoted in Livingstone, 1998: p. 238). The emphasis on the reader implies that the meanings of media texts and content are fundamentally open and unstable and depend on the interpretations of the reader (Livingstone, 1998: p. 238). In addition to this, feminists introduced the concept of '*marginalized audiences*' and thus giving voice to those invisible to normative theory (Livingstone, 1998: p. 238). The reception theories of media audience studies focus mainly on the media text and the ways in which it is perceived by the audience, while the ethnographic and cultural studies shift the attention from textual interpretations to the contextualization of that moment and therefore including an analysis of the culture of the everyday which is re/produced in daily life (Livingstone, 1998: p. 239).

Some of the main media and audience research assumptions that have been strongly criticized are: (i) media texts have fixed and given meanings to be analyzed by elite researcher; (ii) media impact on the public works through the linear transmission of meanings from the sender/producer to a passive receiver – the audience; (iii) audience are considered to be homogenous, passive and not critical; (iv) high culture differs from popular culture (Livingstone, 1998: p. 241). On the contrary, Hall (1997) argues that meanings of media texts and content are not fixed and given. Hall (1997) argues that meanings can never be finally fixed, because they are not the result of something fixed in nature, rather meanings are the result of our social, cultural and linguistic conventions and norms (Hall, 1997: p. 23). In this sense, meaning is produced and exchanged in every personal and social interaction; in mass media; and whenever we express ourselves in, make use of, consume or appropriate cultural things (Hall, 1997: p. 3).

The production and circulation of meanings through mass media such as Public Service Media is particularly significant for the concepts of marginalisation and social inclusion. Hall defines representation as '*the production of meaning through language*' (Hall, 1997: p. 16) and thus meaning cannot be fixed. Furthermore, the audiences are not simple receivers; they are active and critical to media text, and their context matters (Livingstone, 1998: p. 243). Therefore audiences are not homogenous masses, but plural and they have multiple interpretations of media text depending on the context (Livingston & Lunt, 2007: p. 52). Therefore media influence and impacts on self-perception depend on the context (Livingstone 2007, 2). In lieu of the new media, the Internet, the digital mobile, the social network and citizen journalism, the term audiences cannot properly describe the individuals' engagements with media in a context of media diversification, convergence and complexity (Livingstone & Lunt, 2007: p. 59). Therefore new conceptualization of audiences need to emerge in the context of individual engaging with the media and not just received information from them, for instance user generated content, citizen journalism, audiences interactivity and so on, which will be analysed below.

Livingstone (2007) argues that individuals can shape their media culture and therefore constructing their own symbolic environments. This approach emphasises two main aspects of the relationships between media and audiences: the first is the context of media use and the second the interpretations of media content, texts and images (Livingstone, 2007: p. 5). In this sense, Pertti Alasuutari (1999: p. 6) argues that 'the audience' as a social phenomenon 'out there' needs to be replaced by the recognition that the audience is discursively constructed and therefore the analysis of media influence on audiences must consider the discourses which construct individuals as audiences, the context and the audience's notions and perceptions of themselves as audiences (Alasuutari, 1999: p. 7). These new approaches to media and audiences add to the complexity of the relationship between media and audiences when considering the production of meaning for certain communities or groups, particularly with the contemporary media developments.

2.5 Chapter Concluding Remarks

Chapter II looked into the theoretical framework on mainstream media and democracy with a focus on the role of public service media in addressing the communication rights and needs of minority groups such as marginalised communities. Initially, the current debates on public service media and fulfilment of their normative function of providing communicative platform(s) for diverse groups in society. The principles of universality, diversity and quality were assessed based on the challenges faced by PSM. This section explored the contemporary debates on PSM as well as the particular developments and challenges of PSM in emerging democracies such as the case of Albania. This is necessary in order to have a conceptual framework for setting the media system in Albania prior to the analysis of alternative media. From the principles of universality, diversity and quality, the representation of the 'otherness' in mainstream media, both commercial and public, but primarily in PSM was elaborated. This offers the theoretical background for the exploration of the underpinning reasons behind the coverage of the Roma communities in mainstream media.

CHAPTER III: ALTERNATIVE MEDIA AS PARTICIPATORY MEDIA

3.1 From Representation to Participation: A Critical Approach to the 'Public Sphere'

3.1.1 *Multiculturalism and representation: Away with essentialist group identity*

Multiculturalism as a paradigm, stance, discourse, policy and practice is associated with the politics of identity and the narrative of 'recognition', i.e. as recompense to historically marginalized groups who have suffered multifaceted exclusion and discrimination from the mainstream transcript (ideology, policy and discourses). Multiculturalism is thus embedded in the demand for recognition of marginalised groups such as ethnic and cultural minorities based on their group identity. This conceptualisation of multiculturalism entails an embodiment with essentialist notions of group identity as already formed or pre-given identity. This research takes a critical stance on essentialized conceptualisation of group identities as it fails to capture the dynamics and complex interrelations between *'unconscious identifications, conscious alliances and strategic affiliations that shape many people's experiences today'* (Cornell & Murphy, 2002: 421). In terms of political representation, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) argue that there is more to representation than a transparent reflection of already formed and pre-given identities interest and wills. According to this perspective, political representation must be considered as a site of political struggle. A major contribution in the conceptualization of multiculturalism and political representation is that of Anne Phillips (2008; 2009) which will be reviewed below, followed by the elaboration of the merits and limits of the concept of public sphere in regards to representation of marginalized groups.

Phillips (2009) attests to a non-corporatist notion of multiculturalism, which rejects essentialized conceptions of culture and identity and gives priority to the needs and rights of individuals, rather than groups. In this sense, Phillips (2009: p. 9) concentrates on the role of human agency and challenges the dominant discourses on multiculturalism that overemphasizes the group by defining individuals through their cultures. The dominant discourses on multiculturalism promote cultural stereotypes by exaggerating the extent of cultural differences and referring to highly homogenized conceptualization of culture (Martineau & Squires, 2010: 147). These discourses have highlighted the relevance and legitimacy of cultural diversity in order to point out the inequalities, exclusion and marginalisation along cultural and ethnic lines that marginalised groups encounter. Whereas the non-corporatist conceptualization of multiculturalism questions the explanation of human behaviour through invoking cultural explanatory variables and

maintains that actions can be explained in ‘*cross-cultural and human terms*’ (Phillips, 2009: p. 47). In this light, Phillips (2009: p. 165) argues for a ‘*multiculturalism without culture, i.e. in developing a case for multiculturalism, it is the rights of individuals, and not the rights of groups, that matter*’.

The implication here is the rejection of an over-emphasised notion of culture and cultural differences and the understanding of culture more in terms of human agency and rights of the individual. There is a tension in the attempt to advocate for multiculturalism without culture and at the same time to assert that culture is still relevant and it matters because it describes the ways in which we inhabit our world (Martineau & Squires, 2010: p. 149). The tension is theoretically overcome by Phillips (2009) as she points to a coherent account of multiculturalism that is suspect of essentialized and reified conceptions of culture and group identity. The theory on multiculturalism, cultural diversity and group identity affects the ways in which political representation and then participation of marginalized groups functions in practice.

The non-corporatist notion of multiculturalism, i.e. multiculturalism without culture as developed by Phillips (2008; 2009), entails practices and mechanisms for political representation of marginalized groups that focus on the individuals rather than on the unity of the group. Phillips is in favour of instruments that seek to increase the representation of marginalized groups, while ‘*avoiding imposing unity upon disparate groups and installing representatives as the definitive voice of “their” group*’ (Phillips, 2008: p. 558). The acknowledgement that there is a need for greater political representation of marginalised groups couched in terms of individuals is informed by the idea that the ‘interests of the group’ do not reflect and encompass the diverse range of identities, interests and perspectives that individuals within a group hold (Phillips, 2009: p. 166). The ‘group’ is not a homogenous and unified entity; rather it is characterised by internal disagreements, which cannot be underestimated.

In this sense, while a non-corporatist notion of multiculturalism supports mechanisms for increasing the political representation of marginalised groups towards participation, it rejects the attempt to emphasise the group rights over the individual ones. This is so based on non-essentialized and reified conceptions of culture and group identity. Martineau and Squires (2010: p. 151) raise the question of whether it is politically effective to reject essentialized and reified conceptions of culture and group identity and yet continue to promote a version of multiculturalism. The attempt to endorse political representation of marginalized groups drawing from a ‘multiculturalism without culture’ may in practice reproduce the essentialist accounts of multiculturalism based on group identity. The concept of the public sphere is relevant in this discussion as it implies some key aspects such as public associations, discussions, consensus, identity and difference.

3.1.2 Habermasian Model of Public Sphere

Habermas (1974) defines the public sphere as the realm where all citizens come together as private individuals to form the public opinion. Access is guaranteed to all citizens, as well as the freedom of assembly and association and the freedom to express and public their opinion on matters of general interests. In the words of Habermas: *'the bourgeois public sphere may be conceived as the sphere of private people come together as a public...to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor. The medium of this political confrontation was: people's public use of their reason'* (Habermas, 1989: p. 27). The public sphere mediates between society and state, whereby the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion. The Habermasian public sphere is based on the Enlightenment paradigm and the unfinished project of modernity and its main premises are: (i) access to the public sphere is guaranteed to all citizens as well as freedom of association and freedom to express and public ones opinions; (ii) private individuals come together as a public body to discuss matters of general interest, not private issues or private interests; (iii) individuals are formed in the private realm, which is the realm of freedom and has to be protected from the dominance of the state authority.

Habermas conceives bourgeois public sphere as a category that is typical for an epoch that cannot be abstracted from the unique developmental history of that 'civil society' originating in the European High Middle Ages (Calhoun, 1992: p. 6). According to Habermas the concept of public sphere and public opinion were introduced for the first time in the eighteenth century and they arose from certain historical conditions of the bourgeois society (Habermas, 1974: p. 50). The bourgeois public sphere emerged as the sphere of private individuals assembled together into a public body, who used intellectual newspapers against the public authority. The bourgeois public sphere institutionalized not just a set of interests and an opposition between the state and society, but a practice on rational critical discourse on political matters. The very idea of the public was based on the notion of general interest and the discourse about it needed not be distorted by private interests (Calhoun, 1992). According to Habermas the concept of public sphere, the medium of public discussion was unique and without historic precedents: people's public use of their reason. The means of the bourgeois public sphere were: newspapers, journals, pamphlets, coffee shops, salons. Britain, France and Germany served as the model of the development of the public sphere. As per this model of public sphere, at that time (19th century), newspapers and the press in general remained institutions of the public itself, effective in the manner of mediator and intensifier of public discussions. They were not just mediums for spreading the news and not yet the medium of a consumer culture.

The Habermasian model of public sphere is considered to be a liberal model for it conceives the public sphere as mediating between society, as a sphere of private autonomy, and the state, restricted to a few functions. Habermas (1989) argues that the liberal model

of the public sphere cannot be applied to the conditions of the advanced industrialized societies, which are organized in the form of welfare state mass democracy. The conditions in which the public sphere emerged were transformed in the twentieth century in the following main ways: (i) the sharp delineation of state and society has become blurred and individuals have become increasingly dependent upon the state; (ii) the relationship of the individual to the state has increasingly become one of the client or consumer of services, rather than citizen; (iii) political debate and discussions in the public sphere are not based on consensus and rationality, but on utilitarian discussions about distribution of resources and private interests. In addition the debate is monopolised by professional politicians and public relations experts and not the citizens; (iv) the meaning of public opinion has been reduced to merely statistical results of polling surveys. Under the influence of Adorno and Horkheimer critique on culture of mass production and consumption, Habermas (1974; 1989) argues that public opinion is no longer the ultimate authority, but an object and target of intervention strategies designed to manipulate and control it.

Consequently, the historical conditions of the emergence of the public sphere have been transformed in the contemporary political systems. The new developments at that time related to the capitalist economy and national state led to an idea of society separated from state and of private realm separated from the public (Calhoun, 1992:7). When this clear separation began to be undermined by the development of welfare social state mass democracy, the bourgeois public sphere started its decline, to which Habermas (1974) refers to as the degeneration of the bourgeois public sphere or as *Refeudalization*. The structural transformation of the public sphere came about as state and society became interlocked, thus undermining the very condition of the bourgeois public sphere: the separation between private and public realm (Habermas, 1989:175-176). However, the public sphere may be instructive for contemporary political systems in terms of its requirements for information to be accessible to the public. Habermas is concerned with the social conditions for a rational-critical debate about public issues conducted by private individuals. Therefore, the concept of the public sphere is relevant to the political representation and democratic theories. In Habermasian terms, public discourse as communicative action is a mode of coordination of human life as well as market economies and state power. The main difference is that state and market economy are non-discursive mode of coordination, while public sphere is a discursive mode of human coordination (Habermas, 1989). The importance of the concept of the public sphere lies in its potential as a mode of societal integration.

Critiques of Habermasian model of public sphere can be divided in two main perspectives: historical and conceptual. Many scholars (Dahlgren, 1997; Sparks, 2001; Fraser, 1993; Benhabib, 1992, 1996) have criticized the historical perspective of the Habermasian public sphere. Drawing from revisionist historical investigations, Fraser maintains that Habermas does not take into account other public spheres that existed in the XVIII-XIX century: non liberal, non bourgeois competing public spheres (Fraser, 1993: p.

7). However, the main aim of this essay is to focus on the conceptual criticism on Habermas, rather than on the empirical or historical one. Within the conceptual criticism of Habermasian model of public sphere I will make a distinction between two levels of critical commentaries. On one hand, there are scholars (Fraser, 1993, Benhabib 1992, 1996) who remain within the Enlightenment paradigm of rationality and agreement. On the other hand, one may identify scholars (Laclau & Mouffe 2001; Mouffe, 1999, 2000; Foucault, 1978) who reject the Enlightenment approach.

3.1.3 Identity, Difference and the Public/Private Dichotomy

The central presuppositions of Habermasian model of the public sphere that will come under critical assessment in this paper are: (i) the metaphor of the sphere; (ii) issues of identity and bracketing difference; (iii) the dichotomy of public versus private realm; (iv) issues of language and reaching agreement; (v) the issue of consensus and rationality within the paradigm of unfinished project of modernity. Addressing the model of the public sphere in quantitative terms implies dealing with the issue of openness and accessibility, boundaries and limits of participation. While a qualitative addressing implies dealing with the issues of identity of the (non)participants, of bracketing or thematizing difference.

In academia, public sphere is understood as an abstract notion, not a venue. As Hartley and McLee have argued the public sphere is not a sphere, it is a metaphorical term that is used to describe the virtual space where people can interact (McLee, 2004: p. 4). Furthermore Sparks claims that '*public sphere as a reality does not exist and has not existed in the past, the only justification for retaining the concept in circulation is its normative status*' (Sparks, 2001:76). Even though it is neither a sphere nor a concrete place, the metaphor of *the sphere* is very relevant to the discussion about the flaws of the concept of public sphere. The idea of the sphere presupposes, drawing from geometry, that there is a centre from which every other point is equidistant and that the sphere has an internal symmetry. As Gitlin argues the metaphor of 'the public sphere' is based on the suppositions that: (i) it is singular, *the sphere*, not *a sphere*; (ii) it has a unity image; (iii) the sphere has a perfect symmetry, it permits no privileged vantage point; (iv) no direction is superior to any other direction (Gitlin, 1998: p. 68). This way of conceptualizing the space of interaction and communication between individuals as a sphere, a closed entity with an internal perfect symmetry, is problematic. From an empirical or historical point of view one may argue that the public sphere has never been a unified all-inclusive space of interaction (Dahlgren, 1997; Sparks, 2001; Fraser, 1993; Benhabib, 1992, 1996). From a normative point of view one may say that this metaphor of the sphere is not even desirable, for it does not embody the diversity and the dimension of differences in society, which are crucial points in the discussions about marginalized groups.

Many scholars criticize Habermas' model of a singular, overarching public sphere, where all citizens enter as private individuals to discuss matters of general interests. Taking

this as a starting point, scholars like Fraser, Benhabib, Asen move towards multiplicity and they discuss about public spheres not *the* public sphere. Asen (2000) points out that the conceptual movement toward multiplicity of public spheres recognizes the social complexity and sociocultural diversity, which were ignored by the model of a singular encompassing public sphere. In the same line is also Benhabib (1996), who rejects the notion of a singular, overarching public sphere in favour of a 'plurality of modes of association', but, who is, as Dahlberg (2005) points out, one of the sympathetic critics of Habermas, who attempt to develop, rather than discard, the Habermasian public sphere. In addition, rather than deconstructing the Habermasian model of the public sphere, Fraser (1993) critically examines it and then reconstructs the model as a valid category for theorizing the limits of actually existing democracy. Fraser uses the term *subaltern counterpublics* to refer to the alternative publics of subordinated groups: '*they are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, so as to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs*' (Fraser, 1993: p. 14).

Fraser's reading of *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* is first of all concerned with the issue of bracketing status differentials in public deliberation. Fraser (1993) claims that the problem with the Habermasian model is that it requires the bracketing of inequalities and status differentials rather than their elimination. Her main point is that for participatory parity in the public sphere, elimination of social inequalities is required. While Fraser has a good point when arguing against the bracketing of inequalities and differences and claiming for their thematization, the conclusions she draws are also problematic. As Goode (2005) suggests, the claim for substantive social justice is a noble one, but it is based on an undifferentiated notion of equality and it is oversimplified in Fraser's critique, for it does not embrace a wider discussion about justice and equality. Fraser's inferences from her critique on bracketing differential positions and inequalities do not offer an adequate alternative to the flaw of Habermasian conception of identity issues and difference.

Concepts of individual and social identity, difference and plurality are salient to the issues of political participation and representation of marginalized groups in political institutions and media. The way issues of identity and difference are elaborated in the Habermasian model represents another conceptual flaw, which consequently is inappropriate for addressing theoretically and politically matters of marginalized groups. Habermas' conception of individuals as fully constituted and shaped in the private realm before participating in the public deliberation in the public sphere, omits the impact of language and discourse in constituting identities.

Habermas is right when he claims for a model of public sphere, where quality of discussion and the issue of openness and accessibility matter. As Calhoun argues '*a public sphere adequate to a democratic polity depends upon both the quality of discourse and the quantity of participation*' (Calhoun, 1992: p. 2). However, the flaw rests upon the way

Habermas conceives the quality of discussion and the quantity of participation. In the Habermasian model of the public sphere the quality of discourse refers to the rational critical debate, in which the best arguments are essential, rather than personal statutes, identities or social differential positions. First, this conception, as mentioned above, leads to the exclusionary character of the public sphere, for rational critical discussion was conducted by educated and property-owner men of the European society of that time. Most importantly the emphasis on rational-critical debate in the public sphere falls short to adequately consider issues of identity and difference.

A valid observation is made by Calhoun (1992), who maintains that in the Habermasian model individuals are understood to be formed in the private realm, which is considered as a realm of freedom to be defended against the state intervention. Calhoun argues that the treatment of identities and interests as settled within the private world and then brought fully formed into the public sphere, impoverishes the Habermas' own theory (Calhoun, 1992: p. 35). Habermas ignores the possibility that individuals' interests, opinions or identities might be challenged, influenced or even changed by the discourse in the public sphere. Public deliberation is not only about already established interests or common good, it is a way of clarification of the common good (Fraser, 1993) or even constitution of interests and identities (Calhoun, 1992). Referring to Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, one may argue that social identities are artificial constructs, created by language and discourse that is by the perspective of the world that language and discourse offer. This is why, contrary to Habermas perspective, individuals who enter the public sphere to discuss matters of general interests are affected by public deliberation. As Mouffe rightly argues *'political practice in a democratic society does not consist in defending the rights of reconstituted identities, but rather in constituting those identities themselves'* (Mouffe, 1999: p. 753).

Habermas' distinctions between justice and good life, public matters of norms as opposed to private matters of value, public interest versus private needs, are reflected in the distinction between public and private realm. In the public sphere participants discuss about issues of justice, not of good life, issues of public interests not of private needs, issues of norms not of values. This dichotomy presents another conceptual flaw when addressing issues of political participation of marginalized groups, for it has been part of a discourse of domination, which excludes certain issues from the arena of public deliberation. Fixing an already established ordering of public and private often advantages those in power by silencing the concerns of excluded persons and groups. Moreover the dichotomy 'public' versus 'private' assumes *a priori* distinctions between 'public' and 'private', but 'public' and 'private' are not fixed, content-specific categories that structure the public sphere prior to discourse. Rather, 'public' and 'private' emanate from social interaction and discussion (Asen & Brouwer, 2001).

Another implication of this perspective is that these distinctions are external to deliberation in the public sphere, the participants in the public sphere deliberate within this

given framework of these dichotomies. Consequently, differentiation between ‘public’ and ‘private’ does not allow for questioning and discussing the notion itself of what is a public or a private issue (Benhabib, 1992). Participants in the public sphere do not discuss or question these distinctions themselves; they are pre-defined before entering the discussion in the public sphere. Another constraint implies the question of who define which issues is of public interests and which are not. The difficulty is where to draw the line between ‘public’ and ‘private’ and who has the legitimate power to draw such a line. One may argue that those who make this decision have the power of excluding from the public deliberation important issues only by considering them as private. This is a particularly sensitive issue for marginalized groups, for it implies the possibility for a discourse of domination, which confines marginalized groups’ issues as private, thus legitimizing their oppression. Instead, Benhabib (1992) claims that one of the most important functions of public debate is to challenge and redefine conceptions of common good and what constitutes general interests. However, her conception of public sphere is still within the paradigm of rational agreement: *‘central to practical rationality is the possibility of free public deliberation about matters of mutual concern to all’* (Benhabib, 1996: p. 87). Contrary to this, a critical approach to rationality and consensus of the public sphere has been developed by other scholars drawing from the critical social theory.

3.1.4 Rationality, Consensus and the Enlightenment Paradigm

Scholars (Asen and Brouwer, 2001; Laclau and Mouffe, 2001) who criticize Habermas on a more fundamental level would deal with his conceptions of rationality and consensus. Scholars argue that consensus needs not to be viewed as the end of discourse in the public sphere. Besides deliberation oriented toward agreement, discourse in the public sphere may serve a number of purposes, including expressing identity, raising awareness, celebrating difference, enabling play (Asen and Brouwer, 2001:p. 12). Also McCarthy points out the tension between the reality of multiple value-perspectives and the ideal of rationally motivated consensus (McCarthy, 1992: p. 63). Political participation of marginalized groups in public deliberation is closely linked to the recognition of difference, plurality, multiple viewpoints and differential contexts. These sensitive issues are ignored in the Habermasian model of deliberation in public sphere, which is based on rationality and which aims at consensus and reaching agreement. Laclau and Mouffe’s criticism on Habermas offer a more adequate perspective to deal with political participation of marginalized groups.

Habermas elaborates a communicative notion of rationality, whose focal points are dialogue, the force of the best argument and the exchange of reasons. Habermas’ conception of rationality is developed within the framework of the ‘unfinished project of modernity’, which allows him to make a claim for the emancipatory potential of the

rational, that is he considers Enlightenment and the process of rationalization as potentially more enlightened and democratic way of organizing society (Roberts & Crossley, 2004: p. 7). Contrary to the Habermasian perception that the critique of Enlightenment universalism and rationality will undermine the modern democratic project, is Laclau and Mouffe's deconstruction of universal values and rationality as perceived in the Enlightenment paradigm.

Mouffe refers to Wittgensteinian perspective on language as a form of life and agreement on the use of language as a way of deconstructing the basic assumptions of Habermasian model of public sphere: consensus and the procedures of reaching rational agreement. Wittgenstein argues that in order to have agreement in opinions, we must agree on the use of the language and this implies agreement in forms of life. Wittgenstein (1953) conceives language as a "form of life", it is what we do, what we are, how we behave that gives meaning to the language, so the meaning of the word is just a way it is used in a language game. Following Wittgenstein, Pleasants, similar to Mouffe, criticizes the Habermasian conception of communication and reaching rational agreement. He argues that Habermas perceives the idea of rationality as intrinsic in the structure of language: rationality is understood to be purely procedural (Pleasants, 1999:156). On the contrary, to Wittgenstein (1953) agreement does not mean Habermasian rational consent, it means 'language games'. Wittgenstein says that agreement is not based on grounds; it is not reasonable or unreasonable. It is there like our life. '*It is what human beings say that is true or false, and they agree in the language they use*' (Wittgenstein 1968: p. 241, quoted in Pleasants, 1999: p. 156). As Mouffe (1999) argues, this implies to reintroduce in the deliberation scene the rhetorical dimension, which Habermasian discourse model tries to discard. Wittgenstein's conception of agreement on the use of language is at odds with Habermasian idea that people reach agreement/understanding before they can mean anything at all.

Mouffe's critique then turns to the 'ideal speech situation'. While Habermas and his followers consider the limitations of the 'ideal speech situation' to be empirical, due to limitations of social life, Mouffe counter argues that these limitations are in fact ontological. Mouffe (1999) draws from Lacan approach, to conclude that one has to give up the Habermasian idea that discourse is non-authoritarian, based on intersubjectivity communication free of constraints where only the best argument wins out, that is the free and unconstrained public deliberation is a conceptual impossibility.

Habermasian conception of rationality and consensus are closely related to issues of power and discourse in public sphere. Habermasian model of public sphere, which implies the elimination of power and reaching consensus through rational debate in public deliberation, can be strongly criticized by the Foucauldian conception of power as constitutive of the political and that cannot be dismissed. Foucault suggests that power is co-extensive with the social body, that there are multiple forms of relations of power and that there are no relations of power without resistance (Foucault, 1998: p. 142). Contrary to

Habermas and based upon the work of Foucault on power relations, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) would argue that power need not be eliminated, but it should be acknowledged as constitutive of the social. By asserting the hegemonic nature of social order, Laclau and Mouffe (2001) are claiming, in opposition to Habermas, that power is not necessarily a threat to democratic project. Their concept of hegemony, which entails the link between legitimacy and power, is very useful when discussing about deliberation of marginalized groups in the public sphere. This implies a reference to Laclau and Mouffe's interpretation of Gramsci's concept on cultural hegemony: the domination of a discourse that tries to transform the values of the 'dominant' group in universal ones, through a common language, a public space and a dominant discourse.

Mouffe's critiques on Habermas, based on a post-structuralist approach, are of particular importance for the discussion of political participation of marginalized groups. Contrary to Habermas, who excludes passions from rational debate in the public sphere, Mouffe recognizes the role of passions in public deliberation and defends a conception of public sphere as 'multiplicity of voices and complexity of power structures in society' (Mouffe, 1999: p. 757). What is at stake for Mouffe's agonistic democracy, as an alternative to Habermasian deliberative democracy, is *'to acknowledge the existence of relations of power and the need to transform them, while renouncing the illusion that we could free ourselves completely from power'* (Mouffe, 1999:753). Mouffe recognizes the role of passions in public deliberation and defends a conception of public sphere as *'multiplicity of voices and complexity of power structures in society'* (Mouffe, 1999: p. 753). Mouffe is very critical of the rationalistic and universalistic approach of Habermas and his followers. She claims that democratic theory and practice is on the wrong track because they are based on the belief that a universal rational consensus is possible. She maintains that universal rational consensus is impossible even from a conceptual point of view. Instead of designing institutions, which would reconcile all conflicting interests and values, the task for democratic theorists and politicians should be to envisage the creation of a vibrant agonistic public sphere of contestation where different hegemonic political projects can be confronted.

3.2 Conceptualising Alternative Media

3.2.1 From the 'Public Sphere' to counter multiple public spheres

Participation in the public sphere is deemed as a crucial element for the empowerment of marginalised communities as it refers to the basic principles that characterize the communicative action taking place within the public sphere, and where *"participants enter into interpersonal relationships by taking positions on mutual speech-act offers and assuming illocutionary obligations"* (Habermas, 1996: p. 361). However, in Habermas's two-track model of deliberative politics, there is also a strong emphasis on the connection

of the public sphere to realities external to it, and on participation through the public sphere. After all, as Habermas (1996: p. 359) put it, “*The capacity of the public sphere to solve problems on its own is limited*”. In addition, Habermas model of the ‘Public Sphere’ is conceptually flawed and it is not adequate when addressing issues of participation of marginalized communities, for: (i) it presupposes a metaphor of sphere as an enclosed entity with internal symmetry; (ii) by considering individuals as fully formed in the private realm before entering the public sphere, it discounts the impact that discourse have in creating meanings and constituting identities; (iii) the separation between ‘public’ and ‘private’ has been part of a discourse of domination, which excludes certain issues from the arena of public deliberation, mostly those concerning marginalized groups; (iv) rationality and procedures of rational debate as are conceptually impossible. Habermas does not consider that deliberation in public sphere may have other functions expect of reaching agreement; (v) power and conflict cannot be eliminated, for they are constitutive part of the ‘political’, a crucial component of participation that will analysed below.

Habermasian model of the public sphere was assessed from two main levels of normative criticism: for and against the Enlightenment paradigm. Even though Fraser and Benhabib follow the Enlightenment paradigm of rationality, it is worth mentioning two important critical points of their respective commentaries on Habermas - Fraser’s critique on bracketing difference and Benhabib’s critique on the dichotomy ‘public’ versus ‘private’ – which are significant for the discussion of participation of marginalized communities. Mouffe’s main point is that Habermasian model of public sphere and deliberative democracy is missing the dimension of the political and the relevance of passions and conflicts in politics, thus it is not able to offer a good understanding of democratic practices. In conclusion, the two levels of criticism deal with relevant issues for the discussion about political representation of marginalized groups such as: identity and difference, discourse and dichotomy public versus private, rationality and consensus in public deliberation. When it comes to conceptualizing participation in terms of alternative media, this research is in debt with Fraser (1993), who uses the term *subaltern counter publics* to refer to the alternative publics of subordinated groups: ‘*they are parallel discursive arenas where members of subordinated social groups invent and circulate counter discourses, so as to formulate oppositional interpretations of their identities, interests and needs*’ (Fraser, 1993: p. 14). The research argues that alternative media serve to create and circulate the counter discourses so as the counter the dominant narrative on marginalised communities.

As such community, participation and alternative media become the key components of the analysis and will be elaborated in detail below. Community and alternative media are grounded on the assumptions and practices of organizing the maximalist forms of participation (Carpentier, 2007; 2012). Even though there are many terms and definitions on community and alternative media, participation is at their core. For instance Tabing’s (2002: p. 9) definition of a community radio station – as “*one that is*

operated in the community, for the community, about the community and by the community” – makes clear that participation in this type of media organization is not only situated at the level of content production, but is also related to management and ownership of media. As the many case studies show – for instance, those published in *Understanding Alternative Media* (Bailey, Cammaerts, & Carpentier, 2007) – community and alternative media provide ordinary people with media settings where the more maximalist forms of participation can thrive, even in areas rife with conflict (see Rodríguez, 2011; Carpentier & Doudaki, 2013), although not without facing a multitude of problems. Even scholars (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010) who criticize the concept of alternative media, they still recognize the paramount importance of participation although they consider it as dominating too much the study on alternative media.

It is important though to distinguish between participation in mainstream media such as in PSM and participation in and through alternative media, which will be analyzed below. A series of genres and formats within mainstream media such as talk shows and reality TV programmes (but also letters to the editor in the press) have allowed for a certain degree of participation by ordinary people. It should be emphasized immediately that participation in this context is structurally limited, as mainstream media only rarely allow for structural participation or participation within the media organization’s decision-making structures themselves, and also the power positions of participants in specific programmes is limited (Carpentier, 2007; 2012). Consequently, alternative media will be understood as participatory media and the characteristics of participation will be analysed in the following section. Initially the main conceptualizations on alternative media and its critiques will be outlined.

3.2.2 Alternative media models

The theory on alternative media stresses the democratic media potentials that can be realized by opening up access to media production to non-media professionals. The research will look into the theory on alternative media as developed by scholars such as Atton, 2002; Couldry, 2003; Carpentier, 2007; Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2010; Rodríguez, 2003. As such, the key task of alternative media is to challenge the highly concentrated media system and the resulting symbolic power of capitalist mass media by overcoming “the entrenched division of labour: producers of stories vs. consumer of stories” (Couldry, 2003, p. 45). Thus the emancipatory and progressive potential of alternative media lies in opening up access to media production to a broad public. This would allow challenging the mass media’s power by confronting the reality constructed by capitalist mass media with other versions of social reality (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010).

Community media approaches focus on collective actors and the empowerment of individuals. Community media are understood as media that serve a specific geographic community or a community of interest, and allow non-professionals to actively engage in

media production, organization and management (Coyer, 2007; Jankowski, 2003, p. 8; KEA, 2007, p. 1; Lewis, 1976, p. 61; Peissl and Tremetzberger, 2008, p. 3). Such participatory media approaches consider participation in processes of media production as well as in management processes as central defining feature of alternative media. A prominent scholar in this direction is Nico Carpentier, who refers to participation in the production process as content-related participation, whereas involvement in decision-making processes is termed structural participation (Carpentier, 2007, p. 88). Others prefer to use the term citizens' media. For instance Clemencia Rodriguez wants to illustrate that alternative media can assist those who are engaged in their production in becoming active citizens (Rodriguez, 2003, p. 190). Another important representative of the participatory media approach is Chris Atton. He argues that alternative media should anticipate the idea of a society beyond capitalism in the present. In this context he speaks of "prefigurative politics", which in his view cannot be realized primarily on the media content level, but by alternative, anti-capitalist, and participatory organization practices (Atton, 2002, p. 21).

These marginalized communities are disempowered by their treatment in the mass media, treatment against which they generally have no redress. Therefore, the values of alternative media precede from a wish to present other interpretations of stories - and to present stories not normally considered as news - which challenge the prevailing '*hierarchy of access*' (Glasgow University Media Group, 1976: p. 245) normally found in the media. Political, economic, cultural and social elites tend to have easier and more substantial access to a platform for their ideas than do dissidents, protesters, minority groups and even 'ordinary people': '*powerful groups and individuals have privileged and routine entry into the news itself and to the manner and the means of its production*' (Glasgow University Media Group, 1980: p. 114). The aim of that part of the alternative media interested in news remains simple: to provide access to the media for these groups on those groups' terms. This means developing media to encourage and normalize such access, where working people, sexual minorities, trades unions, protest groups - people of low status in terms of their relationship to elite groups of owners, managers and senior professionals - could make their own news, whether by appearing in it as significant actors or by creating news that was relevant to their situation. In a media culture that appears less and less interested in in-depth investigative reporting, alternative media appear to provide information about and interpretations of the world, which we might not otherwise see, and information about the world that we simply will not find anywhere else. Alternative publications are at bottom more interested in the free flow of ideas than in profit.

A model of alternative media is that of radical media as presented by Downing (1984, 2001). Whilst interested primarily in political media, he is not prescriptive about content: rather he privileges process over product, organization and engagement over words on the page and circulation figures. He argues: first, the importance of encouraging contributions from as many interested parties as possible, in order to emphasize the 'multiple realities' of social life (oppression, political cultures, economic situations);

second, that radical media, while they may be partisan, should never become a tool of a party or intelligentsia; third, that radical media at their most creative and socially significant privilege movements over institutions; that within the organisation of radical media there appears an emphasis on prefigurative politics (Downing, 1984: p. 17) His approach is reflected in his choice of terminology: he prefers 'radical alternative media' which, he argues, is a more precise term than 'alternative media' ('alternative media is almost oxymoronic. *"Everything is, at some point, is alternative to something else"* (Downing, 2001: ix). For me his designation signals an interest in considering media as radical to the extent that they explicitly shape political consciousness through collective endeavour (after all, 'rebellious communication and social movements' is the subtitle of his revised work). Yet his model remains limited by his emphasis on social movements.

Moreover, Tim O'Sullivan (1994: p. 200) introduces the notion of 'radical' social change as a primary aim of 'alternative' media, in that they *"avowedly reject or challenge established and institutionalized politics, in the sense that they all advocate change in society, or at least a critical reassessment of traditional values"*. Elsewhere, in defining independent production, which itself can be construed as a part of alternative media, he notes a further two characteristics that set alternative media practice apart from the mainstream: (i) a democratic/collectivist process of production; and (ii) a commitment to innovation or experimentation in form and/or content (O'Sullivan, Dutton and Rayner, 1994: p. 205). For O'Sullivan, alternative media argue for social change, seek to involve people (citizens, not élites) in their processes and are committed to innovation in form and content. This set of aims takes into account not only content, but presentation and organizational procedures. It defines alternative media positively and usefully.

Atton's approach to alternative media is of interest to this research because he offers a theory of alternative media that is not limited to political and 'resistance' media but which may also account for newer cultural forms such as zines and hybrid forms of electronic communication. Thus the 'alternative' in alternative media is not defined only by its content, i.e. political or radical or resistance content; not only by the medium or the technology, i.e. print, audio visual, digital and thus does not fall into the dichotomy of old vs. new media. As a blanket term its strength lies in that it can encompass far more than radical, or 'social change publishing' can; it can also include alternative lifestyle magazines, an extremely diverse range of zine publishing and the small presses of poetry and fiction publishers. However, to *"deploy 'alternative' as an analytical term, however, might afford us little more specificity than saying 'non-mainstream'"* (Atton, 2002: p. 11). The model proposed by Atton (2002) is not be limited to political and 'resistance' media, but is also be applicable to artistic and literary media (video, music, mail art, creative writing), as well as to the newer cultural forms such as zines and hybrid forms of electronic communication (ICTs). The model also takes into account that even within a single area of alternative media there is much heterogeneity (of styles, of contributions, of perspectives). The

alternative media is thus an interesting and promising communication medium for marginalised communities.

The model proposed by Atton (2002) argues that any model must consider alternative media not simply in terms of the differences in content and medium/carrier (and its dissemination and delivery) but in relation to how communication as a social (rather than simply an informational) process is construed. A model of alternative and radical media must account not only for active audiences in the Fiskean sense of creating ‘oppositional readings’ of mainstream media products (Fiske, 1992a) but also for ‘mobilized audiences’ - as well as notions of horizontal linkage, reader-writers and extremely democratic organizational structures. Below, Table 3 offers an overview of the main characteristics of alternative media as developed by Atton.

Table 3: A typology of alternative media by Chris Atton, 2002

Products	1. Content (politically radical, socially/culturally radical); news values
	2. Form - graphics, visual language; varieties of presentation and binding; aesthetics
	3. Reprographic innovations/adaptations - use of mimeographs, IBM typesetting, offset litho, photocopiers
Processes	4. ‘Distributive use’ (Atton, 1999b) - alternatives sites for distribution, clandestine/invisible distribution networks, anti-copyright
	5. Transformed social relations, roles and responsibilities - reader-writers, collective, organisation, de-professionalisation of e.g., journalism, printing, publishing
	6. Transformed communication processes - horizontal linkages, networks

Critiques such as Sandoval and Fuchs (2010) warn against the democratic potential of alternative media. They argue that so far alternative media theory has stressed too much the participatory media approaches. While they agree that participation can have positive effects on those who are engaged in participatory production processes (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010: p. 145), they doubt that alternative media can effectively challenge corporate media power and dominant discourse by simply realizing participatory production processes. They propose the conceptualization of alternative media as critical media, which draws from a “*dialectical understanding of the media system, on the assumption of a dialectical relationship between media actors (producers and recipients) and media structures, such as economic product form, media content, media technologies, media institutions, etc.*”

(Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010: p. 144). John Downing speaks of alternative media as radical media that “*express an alternative vision to hegemonic politics, priorities and perspectives*” (Downing, 2001, p. v). For Downing too, radical media need not necessarily be participatory media.

Table 4: Alternative media characterization by Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010

		Capitalist mass media	Ideal alternative media	
Media Structure	Economic form of media products	Media product as commodity	Non-commercial media product	
	Content and form of media products	<i>Ideological content and standardized form</i>	CRITICAL CONTENT AND/OR COMPLEX FORM	
Media Actors	Consumers	Many consumers	Critical consumers	Critical prosumers
	Producers	Few producers	CRITICAL PRODUCERS	
<i>This dimension is necessarily not a quality of an alternative medium</i>				
This dimension is a potential, but not a necessary quality of an alternative medium				
THIS DIMENSION IS A NECESARRY QUALITY OF AN ALTERNATIVE MEDIUM				

Also Tim O’Sullivan has given a definition of alternative media that is more oriented on political projects rather than on participatory interaction. He describes alternative media as “*forms of media communication that avowedly reject or challenge established and institutional politics, in the sense that they all advocate change in society, or at least a critical reassessment of traditional values*” (O’Sullivan, 1994, p. 10). Although these accounts have merits when considering alternative media, this research is not primarily interested in the political struggles of the left vs the right or anti-capitalist movement and as such the participatory approach to alternative media resonates most with the scope of the research.

The research dwells in depth on the various conceptualizations of alternative media by considering merits and limits. The final approach taken is in debt with the conceptualization of alternative media as put forward by Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2010) and Carpentier (2012) of alternative media with participation as the core characteristic. The key dimension of alternative media is that of participation. Participation remains a widely used concept in various disciplines, including communication and media studies. It is first and foremost related to democratic theory and it implies both the political

process and the importance of the embedded concept of power. In order to make use of the concept of participation in relation to alternative media, it is necessary to transcend from institutionalised politics towards all realms of society, which in turn allows for the identification of the key characteristics of participation (Carpentier, 2012). The research zooms in on the concept of media participation and it differentiates between access to media, interaction with media and participation in media. The discussion of access, interaction and participation leads then to the issue of sustainability of alternative media and the strategies for their development.

3.2.3 From serving a community to alternative media as a rhizome

Tönnies (1963) theorized a distinction between community and society, in which community is defined by the presence of close and concrete human ties and by a collective identity. A second (and related) feature is that a community does not require a formal organizing body, although it is often linked to such a body. Popple (1995: p. 4) distinguishes between communities of ‘locality or territory’ and ‘a communality of interest or interest group such as the black community or the Jewish community’. Popple adds that people sharing a common condition or problem – such as alcohol dependency – can also be seen as a community of interest. Cohen (1985: p. 70), in line with the above, pleads for ‘a shift away from the structure of community towards a symbolic construction of community’ and, in order to do so, takes culture rather than structure as the point of departure.

Communities then become ‘worlds of meaning in the minds of their members’ (Cohen 1985: 20). Finally, Anderson (1983) emphasizes the imaginary nature of the political community or nation, ‘because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion’ (Anderson 1983: p. 15). From this perspective, community is not something that is imposed on people from the outside. A community is actively constructed by its members and those members derive an identity from this construction. This perspective also allows defining community as fluid and contingent, where the feeling of belonging to a community does not necessarily exclude affinities towards other communities or social structures (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008: p. 9).

Figure 3: Conceptualising community, adopted by Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008

<i>Community as close and concrete human ties, as 'communion', as a collective identity, with identifying group relations.</i>		
<u>Traditional:</u>	<u>Reconceptualization 1:</u>	<u>Reconceptualization 2:</u>
	Supplementing the geographical with the non-geographical	Supplementing the structural/material with the cultural
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • geography • ethnicity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community of interest • community of practice • virtual or online community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • interpretative community • community of meaning • imagined community

Bailey, Cammaerts and Carpentier (2008) present three approaches to alternative media as shown in Fig. 4. The aim of alternative media in approach one, i.e. serving the community, is often translated as enabling and facilitating access and participation by members of the community. Societal groups that are represented one-sidedly, disadvantaged, stigmatized, or even repressed can especially benefit from using the channels of communication opened by alternative media, to strengthen their internal identity, manifest this identity to the outside world, and thus enable social change and/or development (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008: p. 15). This orientation towards community also creates a situation of dependency on the community, as two-way communication requires two partners more or less equally interested in communicating. Moreover, the concept of community has often been reduced to its geographical meaning. This reduction has trapped alternative media in the position of small-scale local media, gradually de-emphasizing their role of serving the community and eventually leading to the adoption of commercial media formats in their efforts to survive.

Figure 4: Defining Alternative Media (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier 2008)

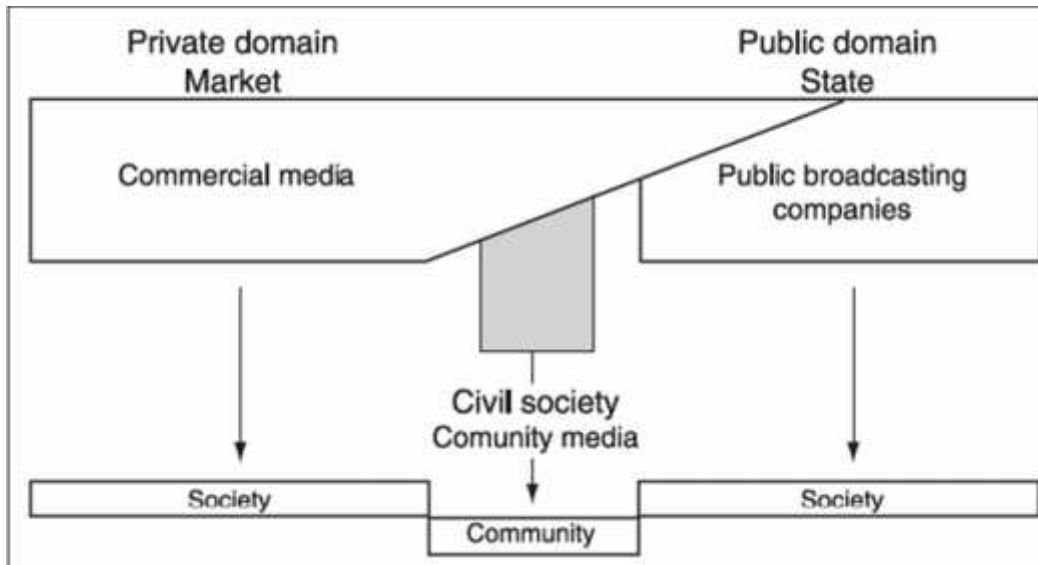
	Media-centred	Society-centred
Autonomous identity of community media (essentialist)	<u>Approach I:</u> Serving the community	<div style="border: 1px dashed black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> <u>Approach III:</u> Part of civil society </div>
Identity of community media in relation to other identities (relationalist)	<u>Approach II:</u> An alternative to mainstream	
		<u>Approach IV:</u> Rhizome

The second approach is that of alternative media as an alternative to mainstream media. This concept introduces a distinction between mainstream and alternative media, in which alternative media are seen as a supplement to mainstream media, or as a counter-hegemonic critique of the mainstream as was analyzed above. As Atton (2002: p. 15) quite rightly states: “*We might consider the entire range of alternative and radical media as representing challenges to hegemony, whether on an explicitly political platform, or employing the kinds of indirect challenges through experimentation and transformation of existing roles, routines, emblems and signs ... at the heart of counter-hegemonic subcultural style*”. Along the same lines, Downing et al. (2001: p. v) describe alternative – or rather, radical – media as ‘*generally small-scale*’ and expressing ‘*an alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities and perspectives*’.

At the organizational level, the existence of alternative media shows that media can exist independent of state and market. As the pressure on large-scale mainstream media to become more market-oriented tends to be considerable, alternative media show that being the ‘third sector’ is still an option for media organizations. This argument can be applied for the (internal) structure of the media organization, as large-scale mainstream media organizations tend to have a more vertical structure. Thus, the more horizontally structured alternative media show that alternative ways of organization, and more balanced and/or horizontal structures, remain actual possibilities (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008: p. 18). At the same time, this rejection of the production values of the ‘professional’ working in mainstream media leads to a diversity of formats and genres and creates room in alternative media for experimentation with content and form. Thus, these media organizations can be rightfully seen as a breeding ground for innovation, often to be eventually adopted by mainstream media.

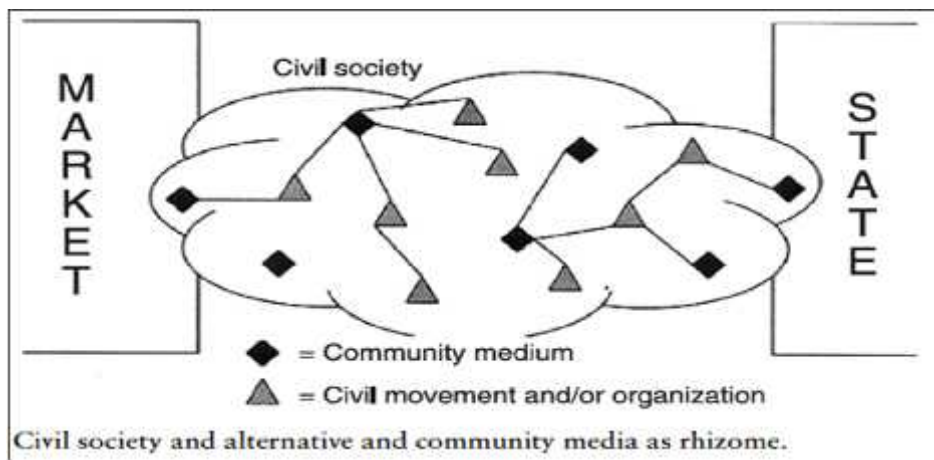
The explicit positioning of community media as independent of state and market supports the articulation of alternative media as part of civil society. Historically, civil society has produced the very ideas of citizenship, as well as the groups and pressures needed to realize these ideas and make social change happen (Janoski 1998: p. 17). Nevertheless, civil society is also a highly contested notion and only regained popularity as a concept after the fall of the Iron Curtain and the crucial role of civil society organizations in the demise of the old communist states (Kenney 2003). By defining alternative media as part of civil society, these media can be considered the ‘third voice’ (Servaes 1999: p. 260) between state media and private commercial media. Providing a complementary alternative to both public service and commercial media. Furthermore, the technological advances in terms of network-based communication tools, digital cameras and compression techniques, have provided these alternatives with new means to distribute alternative content worldwide.

Figure 5: Alternative media as part of civil society (Bailey, et.al., 2008)



The rhizomatic approach allows the rigid separations created by the antagonistic position towards mainstream media and towards the market and the state, to be breached. Moreover, it enables collaboration with public mainstream media, which would be beneficial for both parties if carried out with the utmost respect for the individual identities of the actors involved. The establishment of partnerships between public broadcasters and alternative media firstly would strengthen alternative media, which are sometimes in very vulnerable positions, and allow them to broaden their public sphericules. Such partnerships would also enable public broadcasters to extend beyond their existing limits and innovate, in response to the challenges from digital media. The achievements and limitations of alternative media in facilitating and realizing access, participation, self-representation, self-management, community cohesion, civil empowerment, societal and discursive diversity, pluralism, and democracy should be considered a knowledge reservoir that can and should be accessed by public broadcasters and should be mobilized in the face of a radical pluralistic democracy (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008).

Figure 6: Alternative media as rhizome (Bailey, et.al., 2008)



The rhizomatic is non-linear, anarchic and nomadic. ‘Unlike trees or their roots, the rhizome connects any point to any other point’ (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: p. 19). The rhizomatic approach to alternative media thus focuses on three aspects: their role at the crossroads of civil society, their elusiveness, and their interconnections and linkages with market and state. The metaphor of the rhizome firstly highlights the role of alternative media as the crossroads of organizations and movements linked with civil society (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008: p. 27). Like rhizomes, alternative media tend to cut across borders and build linkages between pre-existing gaps. Alternative media do not operate completely outside the market and/or the state, thus softening the antagonistic relationship (as being an alternative to the mainstream) towards the market and the state. They are, in other words, not merely counterhegemonic, but engage which the market and state. In this sense they are *transhegemonic* (Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008: p. 27). Alternative media do establish different types of relationships with the market and/or the state, often for reasons of survival, and in this fashion they can still be seen as potentially destabilizing.

3.3 Access, Interaction and Participation in and through Alternative Media

3.3.1 Situating the concept of participation within democratic models

This research argues that the key dimension of alternative media is that of participation. Participation remains a widely used concept in various disciplines, including communication and media studies. It is first and foremost related to democratic theory and it implies both the political process and the importance of the embedded concept of power.

In order to make use of the concept of participation in relation to alternative media, it is necessary to transcend from institutionalised politics towards all realms of society, which in turn allows for the identification of the key characteristics of participation (Carpentier, 2012). Communication rights and needs and media participation are paramount to the empowerment of marginalised communities as they relate to the ways in which power is distributed in society. As argued by (Carpentier, 2012: p. 164) “*the distribution of power in society is a dimension of the social that permeates every possible social field*”. Thus it is related to all the other pressing issues faced by the Roma communities in Albania such as health, housing, employment, education and overall social inclusion.

The research zooms in on the concept of media participation and it differentiates between access to media, interaction with media and participation in media. In this light, media participation is deemed as a political process where “*the actors involved in decision-making processes are positioned towards each other through power relationships that are (to an extent) egalitarian*” (Carpentier, 2012: p. 164). The detailed exploration of the concept of democracy, democratic theories and practices is not the scope of this research. Nonetheless, prior to elaborating the different dimensions of participation and the potential of alternative media for the participation of the marginalised communities, it is relevant to ground this concept in democratic theories.

First, one has to acknowledge that the theoretical conceptualization of democracy is complex due: to the fact that there are many varieties of democratic practices and manifestations; the complexity in distinguishing between formal democracy and democratic cultures; and the distinction between institutionalised politics or a given political system (‘politics’) and the broad-political dimensions of the social (‘the political’) (Carpentier, 2012: p. 165). In this light, the issue of alternative media vs. mainstream media relates to the balance between representation and participation as conceptualised in different democratic theories. As such, representation is grounded in the formal delegation of power, where specific actors are authorized on behalf of others “to sign on his behalf, to act on his behalf, to speak on his behalf ” and where these actors receive “the power of a proxy” (Bourdieu, 1991: p. 203).

The representation in this case is channeled through the institutional system, legal and constitutional as well as cultural context. An obvious example here is the representative democracy and the role of periodical elections as an instrument of representation and control of the powerful elites. On the other side of the democratic balance is the concept of participation, i.e. the involvement of the citizenry in institutionalized politics (Dahlgren, 2009). Different democratic models, both democratic theory and practice, attribute different balances between representation and participation. For instance, in the Schumpeter (1976) democratic model, the balance shifts towards representation and the delegation of power as the role of the citizenry is reduced only to participation in the election process. Therefor the power balance remains centralized to the elites and the participation of the citizenry is limited both in time and in space (Dahlgren, 2009; Carpentier, 2012). Other democratic

model such as participatory, radical or deliberative democracy, the balance is shifted towards participation, which is more substantial, continuous and meaningful. It is particularly this positioning of participation in democratic theory and practice that is of interest to the investigation of alternative media as an instrument to counter marginalization.

The diversity of democratic models with participation as central feature is unsettling. However, in line with the scope of this research, the most prominent articulations of participation can be found in the following democratic models, but not only: Marxism, anarchism, the New Left models, and deliberative and radical democracy. For Marxism, in the egalitarian communist society, the principle of power delegation would disappear as participation was organised through every day life and decision-making was decentralised. For anarchism, government becomes entirely unnecessary considering that the decision-making is decentralised and in equal power balance and individual autonomy is maximized (Jennings, 1999).

The strong emphasis on participation in the anarchist model of democracy draws from its discourse of anti-authoritarianism, which resists the establishment of societal hierarchies and systems of domination and privilege (Bookchin, 1996: p. 29). The concept of participation has then evolved to incorporate the challenges of the post-industrialized society, which can be traced at the conceptualization of participatory democracy put forward by Pateman (1970, 1985) and Macpherson (1966, 1973, 1977) and later by Mansbridge (1980) and Barber (1984). The participatory model of democracy of the New Left concentrates on the combination of the representation and participation or otherwise a combination of the principles and practices of direct and representative democracy. Pateman (1970) coined the definition of partial and full participation. Partial participation can be conceived as *“a process in which two or more parties influence each other in the making of decisions but the final power to decide rests with one party only”* (Pateman, 1970, p. 70), and full participation as *“a process where each individual member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions”* (Pateman, 1970, p. 71). She argues for “alternative areas of participation” through which citizens can really exercise control (Pateman, 1970: p. 110). These alternative areas of participation are necessary in order for the democratic polity to exist because it needs a participatory society, i.e. enabled by the alternative areas of participation.

The model of deliberative democracy locates the participatory moment into communication because it defines democratic decision-making as achieved by *“discussion among free and equal citizens”* (Elster, 1998, p. 1). In the Habermasian model of deliberative democracy, participation is multidirectional and the public opinion is transformed into communicative power. According to Habermas the public sphere serves as a “warning system with sensors that, though unspecified, are sensitive throughout society” (Habermas, 1996: p. 359) and that can problematize issues, while deliberative procedures in the formal decision-making sphere focus on cooperative solutions to (these) societal

problems, without aiming for ethical consensus (Carpentier, 2012: p. 168). Habermas's work on public sphere and deliberative democracy is crucial here and will be analyzed in detailed in the following section.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985), drawing from a post-structuralist and post-marxist agenda, developed a radical pluralist model of democracy. Mouffe (1997: p. 8) refers to radical pluralist democracy as a democracy that will always be 'to come'. Even though they do not refer explicitly to participation per se, through Laclau and Mouffe's (1985: p. 176) emphasis on the plurality and heterogeneity of the social, the broad definition of the political and "the extension of the field of democracy to the whole of civil society and the state", the notion of participation moves to the foreground (Carpentier, 2012: p. 169). Laclau and Mouffe (1985, p. 176) state explicitly that the contemporary liberal-democratic ideology should not be renounced, but rather reworked in the direction of a radical and plural democracy, which generates sufficient openness for a plurality of forms and variations of democracy, which correspond to the multiplicity of subject positions active in the social. Thus resonating with the concerns of participation of marginalized communities in the public sphere(s).

Not only discussions of democratic models, both theory and practice, but also the reality of a diversity of groups (interest groups, social movements, civil society or activists, marginalized communities, minorities, etc.) and the proliferation of information and communication technologies indicate that the 'political' cannot be confined only to the realm of institutionalized politics. The broadening of the set of actors involved in politics and mediums have contributed to the expansion of the scope of the 'political' and made participation more heterogeneous and multidirectional (Carpentier, 2012). The 'political', as conceptualized by Mouffe's (2000, p. 101) the "*dimension of antagonism that is inherent in human relations*", touches upon our entire world. Various actors such as democratic and social movement theorists and practitioners, political activities, leaders of marginalized communities, minority groups, to mention by a few, have attempted to disrupt the taken-for-grantedness of a specific social ordering, to question the hegemony, problematize and show the political (Carpentier, 2012: p. 170). This logic does not apply only to economy or politics, but to the cultural and symbolic realm and thus the media sphere. As a consequence, the media is also implicated in the 'political'.

In this sense, the media landscape serves as a feeding ground for dominant and/or hegemonic societal orders, which the same time are legitimized and normalized by the presence or absence of certain media formats, processes and outcomes. Organizations such as media broadcaster or publishers act as discursive machinery that produces these representations, which becomes a delicate issues in terms of minority groups and marginalized communities as it will be analyzed below. In addition, the media are organizational environments on their own with specific politics, economies and cultures where power relations are constituted impacting both the inside world of the organization and the outside world. The assumption that all social spheres, including the media, are the

potential objects of claims towards democratization and increased participation, does not necessarily lead to the realization in practice. The struggle provoked in this case proves to be more substantial in some cases than the others. This research seeks to explore if the struggles provoked by the claim of the Roma communities for democratized and participatory communicative spaces could possibly lead to their realization or on the contrary risks to lead to more resistance from the side of the dominant and hegemonic social order and therefore more self-isolation on the side of the 'dominated group'.

3.3.2 The characterization of participation

The analytical model of this thesis draws from the conceptualization of participation in terms of communication and media research as put forward by Carpentier (2012, pp. 170-172). Based on the analysis of the concept of participation in various democratic models as seen above, the characteristics of participation, relevant to the research on alternative media and counter-marginalization, are as follows:

- (i) the principle defining element of participation is power, which implies the balance between inclusion in the decision-making processes and exclusion through the delegation of power. Inclusion and exclusion can be both implicit and explicit. Power is conceived as always-present characteristics of social relations (Foucault, 1978), which then leads to the realization that in contemporary society, the narrations of power are complex and include power strategies, tactics, counter-power and resistance. All key elements when it comes to the positioning of marginalized communities vis a vis the dominant and hegemonic social order.
- (ii) Participation is not set in vacuum and thus it has to be examined in given contexts by taking account of particular processes, localities, specific actors, cultural, social and political settings and power relations.
- (iii) The concept of participation is contingent and itself part of the power struggles in society. This implies that the debates on participation are not only academic, but also part of a political-ideological struggle for how our political realities are to be defined and organized.
- (iv) The concept of participation does not resonate with the claims of populism, which intends for the replacement of hierarchical differences by total equality. Participation in this analytical model implies the quest for the transformation of the roles in society that will allow for power-sharing between the privileged and non-privileged or elite and non-elite actors. Consequently, the defense of media participation of marginalized communities does not imply the alienation or elimination of media professionals, but an attempt to diversify and open up the communicative modalities and spaces. The intention here is for the media processes, i.e. production, and outcomes, i.e. content, do not remain as

privileged and powerful spaces of media professionals, organizations and industries.

- (v) Another element of participation is that it is not to be imposed, but it is rather invitational. Participation should not be reduced to a technique, but at the same time it cannot be enforced or imposed. This implies both the right to participate and the right not to participate.
- (vi) Participation is not the same as access and interaction. This distinction is important so as to be able to account for the element of power and the maximalist meanings of participation as mentioned previously. Access and interaction are the conditions that make participation possible and both terms are essential when it comes to media and marginalized communities and the digital divide discourse. However, access and interaction are different from participation precisely because they do not explicitly emphasize the power dynamics element as in the concept of participation.

The model presented below covers the differences between access, interaction and participation in terms of technology, content, people and organization (Fig. 8). Access implies achieving presence to technology or media content. It also refers to gaining a presence within the media organizations, for instance audience feedback (Carpentier, 2012: p. 173). The concept of interaction is rooted in the sociological theory and it refers, for the scope of this research, to the establishment of socio communicative relationships highlight the importance of social interaction in the construction of meaning through lived and inter subjective experiences embodied in language (Carpentier, 2012: p. 173). Interaction can take many forms such as interaction audience to audience or audience to media in terms of co-creation of content. Moreover, content-related and structural participation can also be viewed as different levels of participation. The first, relates to decision-making processes related to media content production that include people, technology and can take place in media organizations settings. The structural participation refers to the participation in the management and policies of media organization as well as technology and production settings.

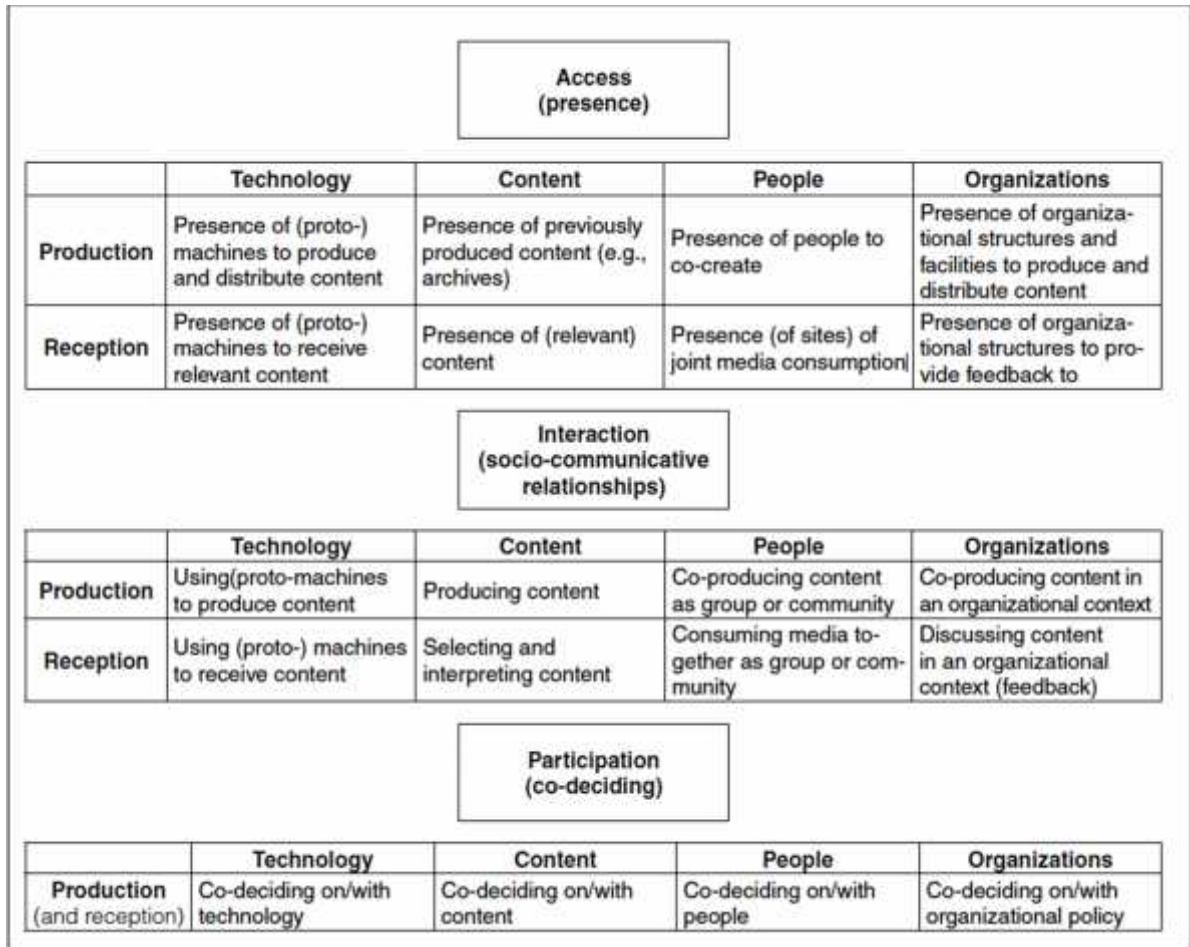
Figure 7: The Rainbow Model to Access



The issue of access to media, either in terms of technology, content, people and production, is of particular relevance for the Roma communities in Albania considering the multifaceted discrimination they face and the deprived living conditions. This unequal access to information and communication technologies resonates with the broader discourse on the digital divide. The digital divide can be defined as “*differential access to and use of the Internet according to gender, income, race and location*” (Rice, 2002: p. 106). Carpentier (2003; 2015) has pointed out that the core of the digital divide discourse is grounded on three main pillars: first, the importance of access to the Internet and ICTs; second, this access will then lead to increased levels of information, knowledge, communication and other socially valued benefits, even though information and knowledge are not the same thing and the benefits of having access to ICTs and the Internet cannot go without scrutiny; third, the absence of access or computer illiteracy will produce or reproduce and sustain a divided society into those who have access and those who do not, i.e. “*the dichotomy between haves and have-nots*” (Carpentier, 2015: p. 10).

This discourse implies access to media technologies and thus in turn to media content, so access in this case is about achieving presence either to media technology or to media content. However, even the concept of access is not straightforward and various scholars have put forward different definitions of it. For instance, Steyaert (2002: pp. 73–74), argues that psychical access to ICTs and the Internet should be complemented with: (i) instrumental skills, which entail dealing with the operational manipulation of technology; (ii) structural skills, which means relating to the use, and understanding, of the structure in which the information is contained; and (iii) strategic skills that imply the basic readiness to pre-actively look for information, information-based decision-making and scanning of the environment for relevant information. Thus, it is not simply an issue of having physical access to the ICTs and Internet, but of having the required competences to make use of the possibilities offered by such technologies. i.e. social facilitation competences. Gurstein (2000) has developed an access model, which is referred to as the “Access Rainbow”, whereby all the above-mentioned access types are integrated into one in order to analyze community informatics.

Figure 8: Access, interaction and participation model, Carpentier, 2012



This brings us to the concept of interaction and the emphasis on the social and communicative dimensions of interaction. As Sharma (1996: p. 359) formulates it, the “two basic conditions of social interaction” are “social contact and communication”. For the purposes of this research, interaction is considered as social interaction and refers to the establishment of socio-communicative relationships (Carpentier, 2015). It is also important to note that within media context, interaction has to be understood as mediated interaction too. Thompson (1995) points out that mediated interaction “involves the use of a technical medium (paper, electrical wires, telephone conversations, etc.), which enables information or symbolic content to be transmitted to individuals who are remote in space, in time, or in both” (Thompson, 1995: p. 85). In this definition, interactivity is seen as a characteristic of specific media technologies (or systems) that incorporate the possibility of user - content and user-user interaction through the interaction between user and technology.

Forces coming from information and communication technological innovation, changes in media policy landscapes and the liberalization of markets have created pressures

for shifting media ownership from public to private, and now to citizen producers as ‘user generated content’ (Beckett, 2008; Cammaerts, 2005; Carpentier, 2009). These transformations pose significant challenges to media policy and regulatory framework as well as to the functions and operations of responsible institutions. The development of alternative media is enabled by such changes, but also challenged. This survey of literature will consider: (i) whether the values that are privileged in media policy and regulatory decisions in Albania allow for, or facilitate the participation by all interested stakeholders – state, private, and civil society and in both national and local level, and thus contribute to democratization; (ii) finding a balance between technological innovation, media policy and regulatory forces in order to create an enabling environment - national and/or local - for new media to impact democratization, for alternative media to counter marginalisation and thus to shift from simple access to participation and empowerment; (iii) whether a purely alternative media can be self-sustainable or should it make compromises for the sake of survival. These dimensions, i.e. participation, enabling media environment and sustainability of media are essential to the quality of alternative media for empowerment.

3.4 Participatory communication and empowerment

The role of alternative media in countering marginalization and empowering Roma communities is linked to the broader discussion of communication for development. In this light, the concept of empowerment also needs unpacking. Authors have argued that “*we need to reshape the field of development communication we must situate its discourse and practice within contexts of power*” (Wilkins, 2000: 1). Jan Servaes links ‘empowerment’ to participation in the collective decisions at all levels of society so that people can control the outcomes of these decisions. Empowerment is making sure that ‘*people are able to help themselves*’ (Servaes, 1999: 194). Melkote and Steeves (2001), in their textbook *Communication for Development in the Third World*, one of the most widely used at present, make empowerment their central organizing concept. They consider the power inequities as the central problem to be addressed in development (Melkote and Steeves, 2001: 36–7). They gather many definitions of empowerment but, for their own purposes, define it as a process in which individuals and organizations gain control and mastery over social economic conditions, over democratic participation in their communities and over their own stories (Melkote and Steeves, 2001: 37). Servaes (1999: 56–9) and Wilkins (2000) understand social power not simply as the capacity to force others to do something against their will, but as a continual negotiation process in a field of many different resource holders. This research is in line with the conceptualization. In other word, power in the field of communication tends to emphasize the meaning of identities of different groups and the resources of these groups through discourses about development.

Servaes argues that initiatives for development must begin with grass-roots

communities and organizations (Servaes, 1999: 93). For him, the main actors in the development process are social movements that break out of submission to a hierarchical structure to establish their own independent system of communication and organization (Servaes, 1999: 158, 189). To take advantage of the development 'energy' of movements, local organizations should be allowed to decide if there is to be a programme at all, what issues it should deal with, how it is to be carried out and how it is to be evaluated. The ideal is to support these organizational initiatives until they can become an NGO managed by beneficiaries so that the local community controls services. Local organizations should be enabled to seek information that is needed and to initiate and control linkages with whatever agency can supply the information or other resources needed. This concept is interesting when considering alternative media as part of civil society. Second, in a development model where initiatives are started and controlled from the grass-roots level, a participatory structure of communication is essential (Servaes, 1999: 84–8). Implied is a policy which favors a multiplication of small media controlled by local communities, organizations and movements. This permits grass-roots movements and organizations to question the ideologies, which depreciate them, select the information, which is truly important for them, and project more positive images of themselves.

Third, an essential step towards empowerment is that every unit of development must seek self-reliance, whether this be the nation or the local community (Servaes, 1999: 79–83). This means first severing ties of dependency on providers of development resources, especially ending dependence on the planning and guidance of more powerful partners. Every unit has to see what its basic and essential needs are and to supply these needs, as much as possible, with its own sustainable resources. A major goal is to be independent and self-reliant in every aspect of national life. Seeking help from the outside is done only to the extent that what comes from the outside is a complement to what the unit already has. This must be followed by building alliances with others who share the condition of being less developed and less powerful. The initial delinking allows for negotiating new linkages in the way, which is most advantageous. If development must be based on local initiatives and be self-reliant, every unit of development will have its own particular model and there will be multiple paths of development (Servaes, 1999). This implies a rejection of the modernization thesis, which defines development in terms of an implantation of western rationality and entrepreneurial values.

The multiplicity model is closely related to a fourth theoretical premise, namely, that development must be primarily defined in cultural (Servaes, 1999: 59–76) rather than economic or political terms. Servaes rightly, in my view, locates the 'struggle' for cultural identity within a theory of ideology taken from the critical cultural studies tradition derived from Gramsci, Althusser, Laclau and Mouffe, and especially Stuart Hall. A major role of theories of communication for development is to systematically 'unmask' these ideological distortions or, better, point to the cultural movements, which are simultaneously revealing ideological distortions, affirming cultural identity and finding ways of resisting cultural

hegemony. Servaes opts for models of communication and development education that are focused on the struggle with ideology and giving people capacity to be the constructors of identity and culture. He stresses the importance of the presence of ideological defense of concentration of power in language and logic and the need for a development education, which systematically deconstructs the ideologies in language, media, rituals and all institutions. The expansion of small group and community media increasingly allows all to become producers of media discourses and to affirm their perception of reality to themselves and to others in the community (Rodriguez, 2001). The building up of confidence about the value of one's culture lays the groundwork for legitimating contestatory action. This kind of media deliberately avoids getting attached to mass audiences so that it is possible to respond to the momentary, fragmented violations of human dignity and equality in daily life (Downing, 2000).

Scholars in multiple fields of social science began using the term “participatory” in the 1980s to refer to a developing new theory in the field of development work (Armstead & Cancian, 1991; Brown, 1993; Kanji, 2009; Servaes, 1989; Servaes, Jacobson, & White, 1996; Servaes & Lie, 1997). Rooted in self empowerment, cultural identity, subverted power structures, and grassroots thinking, the term is considered as a response and critique to modernization theory and dependency theory, both of which drew from macrolevel, top-down, one-way flows of development assistance (Servaes et al., 1996). The term “participatory” is linked to multiple social science terms, such as “participatory action,” “participatory approach,” “participatory communication,” or “participatory action research.” Participatory communication refers to a dialogic, self-managed approach in the communication of a project, where multiple stakeholders hold equal power in the decision-making process. In the context of development and relief work, it often means consulting and allowing a native demographic to lead, design, guide, and manifest a project that holds their best interests at heart. A key mechanism of understanding participatory communication is understanding empowerment (Kanji, 2009; Rowlands, 1995). Empowerment is one's ability to have control over the decisions that affect one's life. According to Kanji, empowerment is how one garners the ability to assert power in a relationship of unequal power.

Table 5: Unpacking the concept of empowerment

Empowerment dimension	Explanation
Personal	“Where empowerment is about developing a sense of self . . . and capacity, and undoing the effects of internalized oppression” (Rowlands, 1995, p. 87).
Close relationships	“Where empowerment is about developing the ability to negotiate and influence the nature of the relationship and decisions made within it” (Rowlands, 1995, p. 87).

Collective	“Where individuals work together to achieve a more extensive impact than each could have had alone. This includes involvement in political structures, but might also cover collective action based on cooperation rather than competition” (Rowlands, 1995, p. 87).
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Based on the above for the scope of this research, empowerment is the affirming of the dignity and value of one’s own identity and re-evaluation of the local culture. It also means signifying the cultural institutions so that one’s own cultural capital is given greater recognition and is seen as more valuable. The signification is also important so that the price of changing power relations is not to give up one’s own identity. With the premise that all cultural identities that contribute to justice and community are valued, the world needs a rich variety of cultural identities. Empowerment needs to be explicitly located within a broader framework of commonly agreed upon parameters of human and social equity. The history of development theory is littered with paradigms such as modernization, the strong state and popular alliances that have ended with the empowerment of one set of interests to the exclusion of other groups (Servaes, 1999: 59–76). Therefore the strategy of empowerment needs, perhaps, to be located within a broader framework of universal human rights. Too often, when movements do achieve the empowerment they are seeking, they feel that they have arrived at their goal. They have redefined their own identity and they are widely accepted. The logic of empowerment causes no sense of urgency to use their power to serve others in a similar situation. The logic of a discourse of human rights or other universalistic discourse affirms that no right is secure unless it is universally respected and implemented. Empowerment may be the answer in terms of an immediate response to a situation, but we need to see how this strategy has worked over a longer period of time. We need to see if we are arriving at universal respect for all human rights throughout the society.

3.5 Chapter Concluding Remarks

This chapter analysed in details the concept of the public sphere and the concept of alternative media by looking at various models and approaches. It emphasised the conceptualisation of alternative media as participatory media and elaborated in details the characteristics of participation in alternative media.

PART II – METHODOLOGY

The second part of the research thesis is that of methodology and it contains Chapter IV, which is structured as follows: first, the research methodology approach; second, the research design, methods and instruments; third, research challenges, merits and limitations. This chapter will engage in details with the research methodology, main advantages and disadvantages of the research methodology. The second part of the chapter will offer an detailed overview of the research design and methodology as carried out for the purposes of this research.

CHAPTER IV – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

4.1 Research Methodology Approach and Rationale

4.1.1 Critical Discourse Analysis and Racism

Racism in this research is conceived in terms of language and discourse and not in terms of physical, explicit and direct racism, which could lead to violence and conflicts. In this sense, racism is subtle, covert and insidious in increasingly cosmopolitan and multicultural societies such as the one in Britain (Teo, 2000: p. 8). This research draws from previous studies that show how the instances of racist discourse in the media actually demonstrate how such discourses are embedded in wider, but hidden power structures of dominance and discrimination in society. The research draws from the conceptual framework of Critical Discourse Analysis as elaborated by Van Dijk (1991, 1993, 2008), Fairclough (1995) and Wodak (2004). In this conceptual framework discourse can be conceived in two main dimensions: first, discourse can be seen as a product of various social processes; and second, discourse contributes to the production and reproduction of the social processes such as power relations and structures of dominance and discrimination.

Critical Discourse Analysis is a form of social practice and is specifically concerned with the *‘relations between discourse, power, dominance and social inequality and how discourse (re)produces and maintains these relations of dominance and inequality’* (Van Dijk, 1993: p. 249). Critical Discourse Analysis draws from the insights of the critical social theory and conceives of discursive data as socially constructed in certain social contexts, which reflect and produce dominant ideologies (Wodak, 2004; Van Dijk, 2008). As a result, Critical Discourse Analysis enables researchers to analyse explicit and hidden social practices as well as structural relationships such as relations of dominance, practices and discourses of discrimination and structures of power, which are represented in discourse through the use of linguistic utterances and texts. Based on the understanding that social practices are constituted through the use of language, discourse can be seen as performing twofold function: on one hand discourse reflects and manifests social processes and structures, and on the other hand, discourse produces and reproduces these processes and structures (Machin & Mayr, 2007: p. 461).

In this line, Fairclough and Wodak (1997: p. 258) argue that *‘the discursive event is shaped by situations, institutions and social structures, but it also shapes them’*. In this sense, it is through discourse that knowledge and individuals and groups in society in a given context construct identities. In the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis every text, such as an interview, newspaper article, focus groups discussion, visual symbols, TV debate, is considered as a semiotic entity, which is set within inter-textual and socio-political contexts (Wodak, 2004; Van Dijk, 2008). As a result Critical Discourse Analysis

will include the analysis of the relationships between utterances, texts, genres and discourses within certain socio-political contexts.

Critical Discourse Analysis is concerned with the ways in which discourse constructs social relationships; individual and group identities, as well as knowledge and attitudes and opinions. Also Critical Discourse Analysis is concerned with the ways in which the discourse contributes to maintain dominant knowledge and ideology (Fairclough, 1995). The use of the term 'critical' in discourse analysis implies the need for researchers to reveal the ideological foundations of discourse that in time have been considered as natural and acceptable (Teo, 2000: p. 12). In addition, the term 'critical' entails that this analysis is not merely descriptive, but it aims at identifying latent meanings (Fairclough, 1995). The Critical Discourse Analysis is relevant in order to better understand how discourses on racism produce and reproduce certain meanings of racism and issues related to it. The Critical Discourse Analysis is also useful to examine the construction of ideological representations of various groups in newspaper texts and to analyse the ways in which these representations shape and influence common knowledge of the citizens in regards to these groups.

Critical Discourse Analysis is thus concerned with the processes that influence the production of text, the reception of text by the audiences and its consumption. According to Van Dijk (2008), the central dimension of Critical Discourse Analysis is the systematic and explicit analysis of the linguistic structures of various texts and the strategies used to produce these texts. For Critical Discourse Analysis, language is not powerful per se, rather it gains power by the ways in which it is used by people (Van Dijk, 2008). Critical Discourse Analysis is helpful to understand how language contributes to construct and transmit knowledge, to organize various social structures and reflect power relations (Wodak, 2004: p. 199). Through the use of Critical Discourse Analysis, the researcher is capable of analysing the ways in which language is used in newspaper texts and in other media content. Groups such as, politicians, journalists, scholars, who control major and dominant public discourses, play an essential part in the production as well as reproduction of dominant ideology and knowledge in society (Van Dijk, 2008). Critical Discourse Analysis is interested in exploring not only what linguistic elements and process exist in texts, but also in explaining why and under what conditions such linguistic choices are made and what other linguistic elements are omitted (Wodak, 2004; Van Dijk, 2008). In this sense, Critical Discourse Analysis takes into account absences and presences in the data.

In the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis the social and political context is essential in the sense that the ideological construction of texts and discourses needs to be situated within social, political and cultural context, as they do not occur in vacuum. This entails making clear how discourses are influenced and determined by social structures and relations of power (Fairclough, 1995). In this sense, the Critical Discourse Analysis involves exploring the ways in which news texts in the press are constructed, the manner in

which they can be interpreted and the extent to which news production, interpretation and consumption can be dictated by social and political contexts. In addition, the critical analysis of discourses embedded in newspaper articles involves the examination of the struggle for power and dominance which takes place within society and is manifested through language and discourse. Critical Discourse Analysis provides us with insights to pinpoint the everyday manifestations and displays of social problems in communication and interaction. Discourse features in newspaper articles may only be symptoms of larger problems such as inequality, class differences, sexism, racism (van Dijk, 1993: p. 251). This does not mean that power relations and structures of dominance can only be explained in terms of text and talk. This implies that discourse plays a crucial role in the ideological formulation of social problems such as racism and in their communicative reproduction.

This research is informed by the idea that the starting point of a Critical Discourse Analysis approach to the complex phenomenon of racism is to realise that '*racism, as a social construct, as a social practice, and as an ideology, manifests itself through discourses*' (Wodak & Reisigl, 1999: p. 175). This implies that racist opinions, attitudes and beliefs are produced and reproduced by means of discourse and discriminatory practices that exclude 'the other' and thus are constructed and legitimated through discourses of race and racism. At the same time, discourses serve to delegitimise and criticise racism, i.e. to pursue antiracist strategies (Wodak & Reisigl, 1999: p. 176). Through the Critical Discourse Analysis of these two newspaper articles, this paper attempts to demonstrate the discursive production and reproduction of racism and the associated discursive counteractions.

This research is informed by the view that race is a social construction and that it has nothing to do with biology (Wodak & Reisigl, 1999; Machin & Mayr, 2007). Historically, race has been used as a legitimating ideological tool to suppress and marginalise certain social groups and to deny them access to material and cultural resources, work, welfare, education and civil and political rights (Teo, 2000). On the other hand, the marginalised and discriminated groups have used race to construct an alternative and a positive self-identity and as the basis of political action and resistance, which has in turn led to movements for independence, autonomy and participation (Wodak & Reisigl, 1999: p. 176). In this framework, racism is an ideology and a discriminatory social and discursive practice that can be institutionalised and legitimated by the dominant elite in society or by the hegemonic social groups.

4.1.2 Qualitative interviews and document analysis

In addition to Critical Discourse Analysis and in order to be able to explore the sub-research questions related to the development of alternative media, Roma communities media usage and future strategies of development, qualitative interviews and document analysis are employed. Interviewing as a method of research intends to understand how

Roma communities deal with media, their communication rights and needs, but also to analyse the role of alternative media so far and explore strategies for development. Critical Discourse Analysis of selected media texts in mainstream and alternative media complements this in order to zoom in on the research topic.

Interviews and interviewing individuals or focus groups is one of the principal research method applied to collect data in academic research concerning media and journalism. Kvale (2007: p. 1) defines interviews as a structured conversation that aims to understand the views and the experiences of the subject interviews in relation to the research topic and aim. Interviewing as a research method may have a qualitative or a quantitative nature and that depends on the topic and purposes of the research. In the case of surveys or national census researcher apply structured and closed questions to collect information from individuals and thus apply a quantitative approach to analyse the data collected (Gunter, 2000: p. 130).

On the contrary, a qualitative research interview aims at understanding the world from the subject's point of view and to analyse the meanings of personal experiences and perspectives (Kvale, 2007: p. xvii). For the purposes of this research the data collected through interviews will be analysed applying content analysis, which will be detailed in the following lines. One of the main advantages of applying interviewing as a method of research is that it will allow gathering information in regards to the ways in which journalism is being affected by new media and digital broadcasting from journalists, i.e. individuals that work in the field and have personal experiences with both traditional and mainstream media. This will also help in the contextualisation of the research question by drawing from live experiences and perspectives (Esterberg, 2002: p. 96). However, one of the main downturns of using interviewing is that of ethical issues. The data collected from interviewing journalists in the UK and China will depend on the relationship between the interviewee and the researcher (Kvale, 2007: p. 8). In addition, the researcher needs to create an environment whereby the interviewee feels comfortable, free and safe to respond (Kvale, 2007: p. 8). In the interviewing process these ethical questions will be considered carefully and the integrity of the interviewee will be respected.

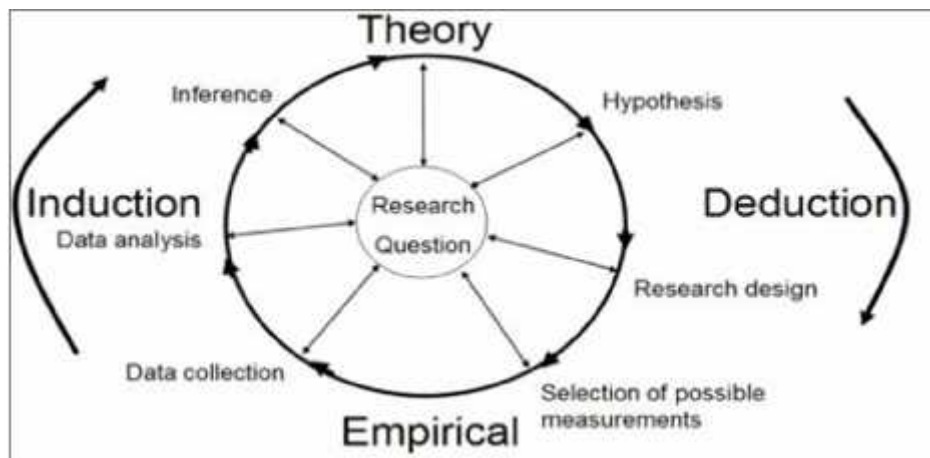
The interviewing includes pre-interview steps, which include working on the questions for the interviews based the research design and research question, as well as post-interview steps, which include transcriptions, documentation, analysis and reporting of the interviews (Esterberg, 2002: p. 94). The research procedures consist of three main phases: (a) the first one is the selection of individuals to interview; making contact with them and conducting the interviews; (b) selecting the media texts to be analysed and deciding on how many texts and which ones will be chosen; (c) documenting all the data collected, coding, framing and analysing.

4.2 Research Design, Process and Methods

4.2.1 Qualitative research design

Informed by the conceptual framework and methodology approach and rationale as outlined in the previous sections, a qualitative research design was developed. The research process is complex as presented in Fig. 10 below, i.e. the construction of the research questions and hypotheses started from theory and then are tested via the collection of empirical primary data, but also the research process was open and explanatory. Deductive reasoning works from the more general theory to the more specific. This research draws from the theory on alternative media and participation and then builds up hypothesis to be confirmed or not through empirical data collection. During the research process and while collecting data to address the hypotheses, they were narrowed down. Nonetheless, the research includes also an analytical and explanatory framework, but it does not seek to present new theory on alternative media, rather to examine the case study of alternative media for Roma communities in Albania and thus add to the scholarship with an in-depth and thorough case study. As a qualitative research it is based on inductive reasoning.

Figure 9: Research design and process



**Adopted by the Qualitative Research Training Course, CAMRI, 2015*

Given that this is a qualitative research, which is usually not preemptive, the research design is strictly related to the research questions, the chosen methods, from the selected topic and aims, and also, in an ongoing process, from the data collection. As a result, scoping is an ongoing process in this project, i.e. adjustments to the mode of making data were frequently required so that the project can be data driven and the research questions and hypotheses were adjusted accordingly and in line with conceptual framework as will be detailed below in the section on research process.

The comparative framework on qualitative and quantitative research methodology approach informs this research design. As mentioned above, this research has adopted a qualitative research approach and design, which implies a systematic subjective approach to analyze the research topic and attempt a thorough comprehension of the selected case study. As a consequence, the research seeks to gain in-depth and thorough insights on the issue of alternative media for empowerment of Roma communities and explore the inherent complexity of the phenomenon without attempting to present a clear-cut correlation relationship of cause and effects.

In this light, based on the conceptual framework and research design of a complex inductive, analytical and explanatory reasoning, this research looks into meaning and their construction, which then leads to exploration of narratives and discourses on marginalization and empowerment and the role of media. The interpretation of the results of data collection and analysis does not seek to build theory, but rather to explain the case of Albanian alternative media for empowerment of marginalized communities in light of the already existing alternative media theory. Therefore the key feature of the research is its uniqueness and in-depth exploration of the particular selected case study, which is contrary to the quantitative approach that seeks to generalize the findings and confirm cause and effect relations. Table 5 details the differences between qualitative and quantitative approach.

Table 6: Comparison between qualitative and quantitative research design

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Definitions	a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning	a formal, objective, systematic process for obtaining information about the world. A method used to describe, test relationships, and examine cause and effect relationships
Aims	to gain insight; explore the depth, richness, and complexity inherent in the phenomenon.	To test relationships, describe, examine cause and effect relations
Features	Soft science Focus: complex & broad Holistic Subjective Dialectic, inductive reasoning Basis of knowing: meaning & discovery Develops theory Shared interpretation Communication & observation Basic element of analysis: words Individual interpretation Uniqueness	Hard science Focus: concise & narrow Reductionistic Objective Logistic, deductive reasoning Basis of knowing: cause & effect, relationships Tests theory Control Instruments Basic element of analysis: numbers Statistical analysis Generalization

**Adopted by the Qualitative Research Training Course, CAMRI, 2015 and Researcher's own lectures on methods in social sciences*

As a qualitative research design, its main characteristics are: the design is based on critical social constructivism as analyzed in the previous section; the research problem becomes the research aim and then the research question based on prior research as outlined in the introductory chapter; the size of the sample is not important and therefore it is small because the main focus is the in-depth analysis of the case study through various methods; the methods are critical discourse analysis, interviews and focus groups as well as document analysis and analytical review of secondary resources; finally the interpretation of data is based on the combination between researcher's perspective and data collected within the conceptual framework. Transcribing, coding and themes are crucial for this qualitative research design.

4.2.2 *Qualitative research process*

The qualitative research process included three main phases: first, the desk research; second, fieldwork and data gather; and third, data analysis and interpretation as presented in Fig. 11 below in a nutshell.

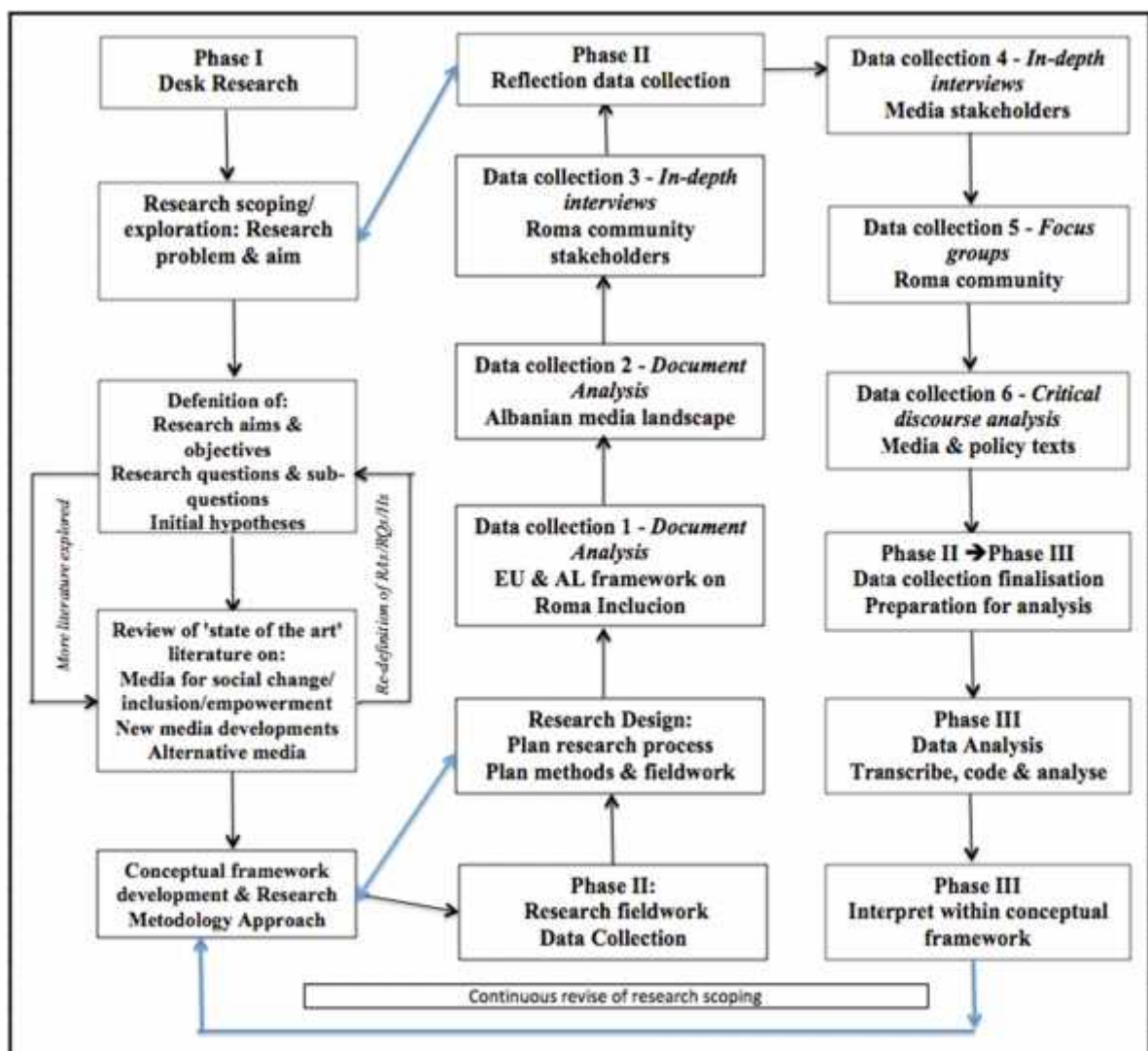
Figure 10: Research process main phases



More concretely, the review of literature included exploration of academic sources on marginalisation, social inclusion, alternative media and participation as well as public service media and democracy. As a result the second part of the research thesis was drafted with two main chapters outlined above: (i) media and democracy with focus on provision

of universality, diversity and quality for social inclusion of diverse groups in society; (ii) alternative media potential and limits for empowerment of marginalised communities. Using desk research and online resources such as e-journals and e-books a thorough theoretical framework was designed. It also makes reference to previous research conducted by the researcher as well as the consultation with senior researchers at CAMRI, University of Westminster and in the final stage at Uppsala University.³ As a result, a conceptual framework was developed providing the models of alternative media and conceptualisation of the public sphere as well as the foundations for the qualitative methodology. At the end of the desk research the research aim, questions and hypothesis were revisited and re-defined compared to the initial proposal as shown in Fig. 12 below.

Figure 11: Research phases in details



**Developed by the researcher to present in a schematic form the research process.*

³ For more see the section on *Supervision and Research Fellowship* at the beginning of the doctoral thesis.

4.2.3 Research methods: Document analysis, interviews, focus groups, CDA

Upon completion of the desk research phase, whereby the research aims, questions and hypotheses were initially designed and revised as per the review of literature and the conceptual framework, the preparation for the second phase started. Phase II implies research fieldwork and data collection. It drew heavily on the conceptual framework and research methodology approach in order to set up the research design and then the research process. The research fieldwork included 6 data collection mini-phases as shown in Fig. 12 above.

First, data collection on Roma communities in Europe and in Albania was completed. Document analysis was deemed as the most appropriate research method for this purpose. The data collected during this phase refer to the European and Albanian policy framework on Roma communities as well as approaches towards their social inclusion in order to better explore the research problem. Tab. 6 below details the documents' titles that were analysed, the institution that produced the document(s) and the type.

Table 7: Document Analysis 1– Type of Documents for Roma communities Framework

Document	Institution	Type
European Framework on Roma Integration and Social Inclusion	European Commission, 2011	Policy document
European Commission Communication on Member States for Roma Integration and Social Inclusion	European Commission, 2013	Policy document
European Commission Reports on Roma status and living conditions	European Commission, 2013; 2014; 2015	Periodical official report
Council of Europe Reports on Improving the Living Conditions of Roma	Council of Europe, 2015	Periodical official report
UNESCO Media Guidelines for Roma Communities	UNESCO, 2011	Guidelines
UNESCO Community Media Report for Marginalized Groups	UNESCO, 2013	Assessment Report
Albanian National Strategy on Improving the Living Conditions of Roma and Egyptians	Government of Albania, 2003	Policy document
National Development and Integration Strategy 2007-2013	Government of Albania, 2006	Policy document
Cross-sectorial Social Inclusion Strategy 2007-2013	Government of Albania, 2006	Policy document

Draft National Development and Integration Strategy 2014-2020	Government of Albania, 2014	Policy document
Draft Social Inclusion Strategy 2014-2020	Government of Albania, 2014	Policy document
Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth related reports	Government of Albania, 2014, 2015	Assessment Report
Reports on the Roma living conditions in Albania (World Vision, UNDP, Save the Children)	International Organizations	Assessment Report

Primarily policy and official documents were consulted complemented by periodical and assessment reports as well as international and national non-governmental organisation reports, either periodical or assessments. In addition guidelines on best practice were also consulted. A total of 26 documents were analysed, most of which in English. The documents produced by the Albanian government were in Albanian as shown in Tab. 7 below.

Table 8: Document Analysis 1 - Sample of data collected

Document Type	Source	Number	Language
Policy document	European Commission	6	English
	Government of Albania	5	Albanian
Periodical official report	European Commission/Council of Europe/International Organizations	5	English
Assessment Report	European Commission/Council of Europe/International Organizations	6	English
Guidelines	UNESCO	1	English
Others	Various: NGOs, Official	3	Albanian

The coding of the documents and data collected was done by referring to the sub-research questions and main themes of interest for the research aims and objectives. In this regard, for the European and Albanian framework on Roma communities the following were the key themes that served to code and analyse: policy approach; education; employment; healthcare; housing; communication rights and needs; social inclusion.

Second, data on Albanian media landscape were collected through documents analysis (Data Collection 3 – Document Analysis: Albanian media landscape in Fig. 12). This was primarily done through document analysis and analytical review of secondary resources. The documents were categories as follows: policy document, periodical reports, assessment reports and working papers, as well as an open category of other documents. Tab. 9 below summarises the document consulted for the review of Albanian media landscape.

Table 9: Document Analysis 2 – Types of Documents on Media Landscape in Albania

Document	Source	Type
Limited assistance for limited impact: International Media Assistance in Albania	AMI/Regional Research Promotion Programme, 2013	Working Paper
Albania Population and Population Dynamics: New Demographic Horizons?	INSTAT, 2015	Assessment Report
Media Integrity Matters: Reclaiming Public Service Values in Media and Journalism	AMI/Southeast European Media Observatory, 2013	Assessment Report
A blind eye on the news: Self – censorship in the Albanian media	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, 2015	Assessment Report
Mapping the Digital Media: Albania Country Report”, Open Society Foundations	AMI/Open Society Foundation, 2012	Assessment Report
Western Balkans and Turkey Media and Freedom of Expression Fact-finding and Scoping Study	European Commission, 2013	Assessment Report
Albania 2015 Report	European Commission, 2015	Periodical report
Media Partnership Programme Albania	European Broadcasting Union, 2015	Assessment Report
Audio-visual Media Authority Report	AMA, 2014	Periodical report
Balkan Media Barometer	AMI/FES, 2013	Assessment Report
Report - Permanent Council - Head Of The OSCE Presence in Albania	OSCE, 2015	Assessment Report
Albanian Radio & TV Report	rtsh 2014	Periodical report
Digital Strategy 2015-2020	Government of Albania, 2015	Policy Document
Inter sectorial strategy for Information Society 2008-2013	Government of Albania, 2008	Policy Document
Law No. 97 on Audio-visual media	2013	Legislation/Policy

authority		
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A total of 21 documents were analysed, most of which in English. The documents produced by the Albanian government were in Albanian as shown in Tab. 10 below.

Table 10: Document Analysis 2 – Sample of data collected

Document Type	Source	Number	Language
Policy document	Government of Albania	3	Albanian
Periodical official report	European Commission	1	English
	rtsh/AMA	2	Albanian
Assessment Report	European Commission/OSCE/International NGOs	8	English
Working paper	AMI/Regional Research Promotion Programme	1	English
Others	Scholarly sources	6	Albanian

The coding of the documents was based on the key topics of interest as identified in sub-research questions: media policy framework and discourse; developments of new media and digital society; developments of alternative media; public service media.

Data collection 3 (Fig. 12 above) refers to in-depth interviews with Roma communities stakeholders, i.e. representatives from Roma communities NGOs, governmental institutions working on social inclusion of Roma and international organisation with a focus on human rights. In total 8 in-depth interviews were conducted with representatives from Roma NGOs, international nongovernmental organisations as well as public entities working on Roma in Albania. The sample, obviously, was intentional and based on the previous research and working experience with the community. Tab. 11 summarizes the sample of the in-depth interviews with the Roma stakeholders.

Table 11: In-depth Interviews 1 - Roma stakeholders

Respondent	Institution	Type
Executive Director	Institute for Romani Culture in Albania	Roma NGO
Specialist	Municipality of Tirana, Section of Social Inclusion and Roma	Local Government
Advisor	Minister of Social Welfare and Youth	Central Government
Director	UNDP Programme on Roma	International Organization
Programme Director for Social Inclusion	Open Society Foundation	International Organization
Communication Expert	World Vision	International Organization
Founder	Kanxura Radio	Alternative media
Programme Manager	Rome Education Fund	International Organization

All respondents were approached via a formal email in order to gain their informed consent on participating in the research project: the aim of the project was explained as well as the way the data would be used and published. Confidentiality of data gathered was guaranteed to the participant and will be maintained. The guideline for in-depth interviews was prepared in advance and included:

- Brief description of the organisation and role within the organisation;
- The current media coverage of Roma and Roma issues in Albanian mainstream media;
- Development of communicative capacity and spaces for Roma and particularly for Roma youth;
- How to produce more participatory media for the Roma communities?
- How can a Roma communities radio be developed? What will be the main challenges?
- How is Radio Kanxura working? Successes and constraints.

The interviews were conducted in person in April till September 2014 and were then fully transcribed in Albanian with the main themes translated in English. At the end of this phase a reflection on the fieldwork was carried out and an assessment of the steps to follow as well as a review of the research scope, which implied a revision of research questions and hypothesis based on the initial raw data and insights.

Data collection 4 (Fig. 12 above) refers to in-depth interviews with media experts and activities. 11 in-depth interviews were conducted with media experts, researchers and stakeholders in Albania and also in European settings. The research process was similar to

the one with the Roma communities stakeholders, but with the challenge of difficult access to media policy makers and scholars. This was overcome based on network of previous research work on media. Tab. 12 summarizes the sample of in-depth interviews with media experts.

Table 12: In-depth Interviews 2 - Media stakeholders

Respondent	Institution	Type
Head/Chair	Parliamentary Commission on Education and Public Information Mediums	Legislation and Policy
Member	National Council for Radio and Television	Public Service Media
Journalist	Albanian Radio & TV (rtsh)	Media professional
Former member	Audiovisual Media Authority	Policy
Head/Chair	Albanian Union of Journalist	Media professional
Journalist	Radio Kanxura	Alternative Journalism
Researcher	CM University - Skopje	Media scholar
Practitioner	UNAOC - E4SC	Media activist
Researcher	University of Belgrade	Media Scholar
Senior Researcher	CAMRI, University of Westminster	Media scholar

The primary data gathered consists of both written and oral sources. The sample of the research is 10 In-depth interviews with journalists, media scholars, experts and policy makers. The fieldwork was conducted in the period 01st March 2015 and 31st July 2015. The instruments of research included: approaching interviewee via email – ensuring informed consent to participate; conducting the interviews in Albanian at preferred time and location of interviewee; transcript of interviews, translation into English and initial data analysis. Again confidentiality of data gathered was guaranteed to the participant and will be maintained. The guideline for in-depth interviews was prepared in advance and differed a bit in scope than the in-depth interviews with Roma stakeholders:

- Brief description of the organisation and role within the organisation;
- The current media coverage of Roma and Roma issues in Albanian mainstream media and other settings;
- Development of communicative capacity and spaces for Roma and particularly for Roma youth in theory and practice;
- Community and alternative media challenges and best practices.

Data collection 5 (Fig. 12 above) refers to focus groups with Roma communities. The focus groups were organised in collaboration with Roma and non-Roma NGOs working with marginalised communities in order to assess and understand the needs of the Roma communities in regards to developing their own medium of expression and communication channel. This was primarily done with the Institute of Romani Culture in Albania and the Corpus of Roma Volunteers as well as with Roma students from the European University of Tirana. 3 focus groups were organised in September to December 2014. The guideline for the 3 focus groups involved:

- Warm up exercise;
- Discussing the current media coverage;
- Identifying the communication needs;
- Self-assessing the capacities of the community regarding media;
- Discussing the idea of an alternative media such as a Roma communities radio

33 people involved in the focus groups and informal discussions and results were transcribed in Albanian. Data analysis and interpretation was conducted through the use of critical discourse analysis as per the research project aims and research question. The write up of the research was done in different phases such as background, literature review, conceptual framework and then analysis and conclusions.

Table 13: Focus Groups - Sample and Data

Focus group	Number of participants	Composition	Time	Themes
(FG1) 06th November 2014	13	Roma and Egyptian youth	90 minutes	Mainstream media coverage; online media; communication needs
(FG2) 12th November 2014	9	Members of Roma communities	95 minutes	Marginalization; Needs assessment; Media
(FG3) 19th November 2014	11	Members of Roma communities	110 minutes	Marginalization; Needs assessment; Media

The composition of the focus groups differed from focus group 1 to focus group 2 and 3. Focus group 1 was composed of Roma and Egyptian youth, who are educated to at least secondary education and are active in Roma NGOs and other activities throughout Albania. The participants in focus group 1 came from Tirana, Fieri, Berat, Durrës and Korça. Roma communities leaders such as head of Roma organisations accompanied them. The participants in focus group 2 and 3 were ordinary members from Roma communities

mainly in Tirana and Durrës, who were not necessarily literate or educated and who represented some of the most marginalised members of the community. They were accompanied by Roma communities activities. This composition was done in purpose in order to gain insights from a diverse range of profiles with the Roma communities by taking into account the heterogeneity of the community, complex and diverse profiles and lifestyles.

The data collected in Data Collection 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 as in Fig. 12 above are qualitative and unstructured data. As outlined in the methodology approach, they are analysed by employing critical discourse analysis (CDA). The research is interested in the discursive construction of 'us' vs. 'them', which is the foundation of prejudices, discrimination and marginalization of certain communities in society such as the Roma communities in Albania. The data will be analysed in order to trace the construction of dominant discourses in the public sphere regarding the Roma communities and then the counter-discourses in the multiply counter public spheres. This discursive construction starts with the labeling of the social actors, proceeds to the generalization of negative attributions and then elaborates arguments to justify the exclusion of many and inclusion of some. The discursive realizations can be more or less intensified or mitigated, more or less implicit or explicit, due to historical conventions, public levels of tolerance, political correctness, context and public sphere (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). As a result the CDA coding and analysis looks at the following main elements or themes:

- The naming and reference of Rom community (linguistically) in policy documents and other texts as outlined above;
- The traits, characteristics, qualities and features attributed to them in the dominant discourses;
- Argument frameworks that are used to legitimize the exclusion of Roma;
- Typology of policy intervention: normalization, integration or rehabilitation;
- The utterances of the discourses are open, latent or mitigated.

The text refers to the transcribed qualitative data from the methods outlined above and media materials collected to this purpose. The text, as shown in Fig. 13 below, is conceived as text and as representation. The text as representation has two dimensions: first, as representation of the group investigated, i.e. the Roma communities in Albania and secondly, as the representation of the situation investigated, i.e. the marginalization of the Roma communities and media implications for empowerment. A matrix for the analysis of the data using critical discourse analysis was developed as shown below in Tab. 13. The first step was familiarisation with the transcribed text from interviews and focus groups as well as the documents selected in Data collection 1 and 2. Secondly, the themes as per the coding were identified and highlighted and the texts were re-read to set the themes within the context of the data. Third, the data was then entered into the matrix and the major themes were identified and analysed.

Figure 12: Text and Critical Discourse Analysis

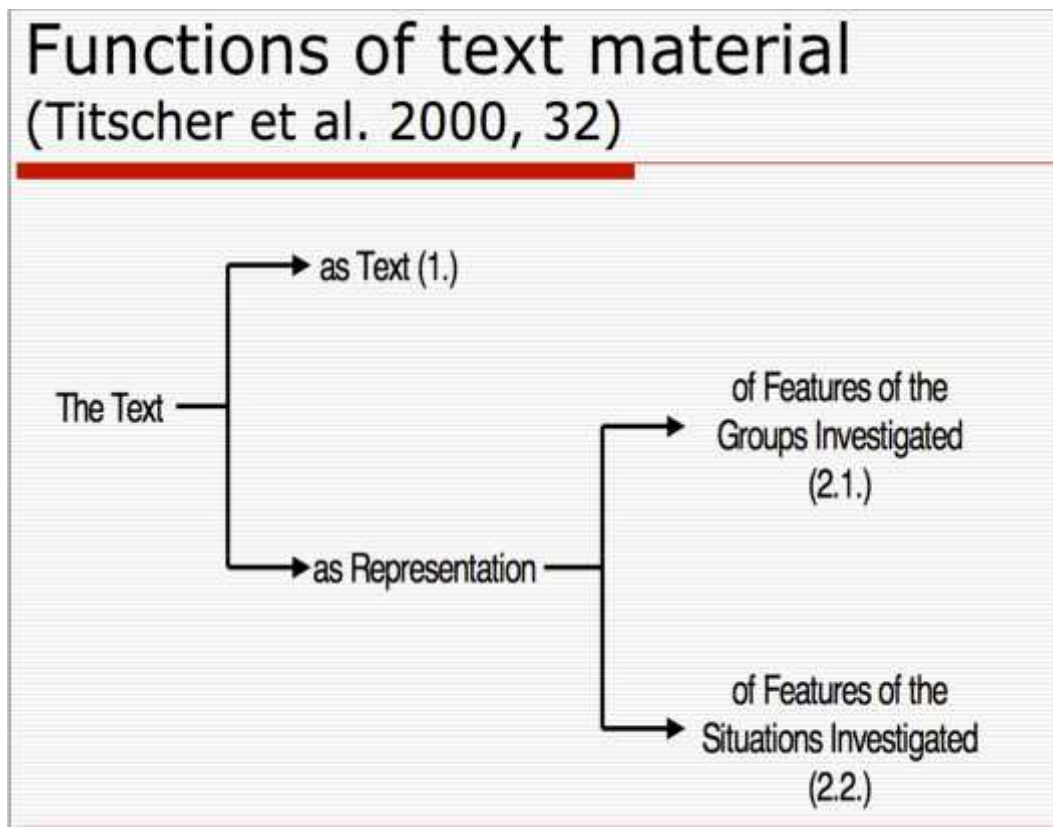


Table 14: Matrix for Critical Discourse Analysis of Data Collected

	Texts						
	Policy	Civil society settings	International sphere	Public Service Media	Alternative Media	Scholarship/ Experts	Community itself
Categories of analysis - CDA							
The naming and reference of Rom community (linguistically) in policy documents and other texts as outlined above;	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data
The traits, characteristics, qualities and features attributed to them in the dominant discourses;	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data
Argument frameworks that are used to legitimize the exclusion of Roma;	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data
Typology of policy intervention: normalization, integration or rehabilitation;	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data
The utterances of the discourses are open, latent or mitigated.	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data	Data

4.3 Research Challenges, Merits and Limitations.

While Critical Discourse Analysis is an appropriate instrument to examine the discourses on marginalisation and potential of alternative media, it is not adequate for investigating other areas of interests included in this research, such as: the implications of the discourse in terms of the audience and media usage by the Roma communities. As such survey/questionnaire method have been used so as to explore the other research question. In this sense, one of the main objections to discourse analysis is that '*it tells us nothing about the agents of the actions, about their place and time*' (Leeuwen van, 2005: p. 13). It does not allow us to study the reaction of the public to both the discourse and the way in which it is represented and covered by media. Leeuwen (2005) argues that to discuss this we have to research the production and reception of the texts ethnographically.

Another potential objection to critical discourse analysis is that it is not able to produce empirical generalization as other social research methods do, such as surveys, questionnaires and so on. Gills (1996) answers to such critiques by arguing that Critical Discourse Analysis does not set out to identify any universal processes. Critical Discourse Analysts are critical of the idea that such generalizations are possible, arguing that discourse is always constructed from particular interpretative resources and always designed for specific interpretative contexts (Gill, 1996: p. 155). Thus, this research does not pretend to offer generalization on discourses on Roma communities and its implications, rather it has target a specific discourse and its narratives and aims at scrutinizing it in-depth so as to capture the main dimensions and the implicit or explicit themes. As Foucault (1978) have pointed out all discourse is occasioned: there are no trans-historical, trans-cultural, universal accounts, expects those that might be 'produced' by the artificiality of research context.

Another limit of Critical Discourse Analysis concerns the issue of representativeness. Sometimes the selection of a certain talk or text may not be representative (Gill, 1996: p. 155). Also, it is argued that the choice of the research goals, the methods of inquiry, the theories, the objects of analysis cannot be independent of researcher own socio-political positions and interests and of the wider social context of research (van Dijk, 1985: p. 1). The issue of objectivity and researcher's autonomy is a very complex one and for consideration of space it will not be dealt with here. However, the issue is that such a concept, as 'objectivity' does not exist; researchers cannot be fully independent from their own values and thoughts. What is at stake is that 'on the whole academic scholarship should remain autonomous, and not be put under the constraints of external social or political developments, decisions or policies' (van Dijk, 1985: p. 3).

This research takes into consideration both strengths and limits of the Critical Discourse Analysis as a research method. However, the recognition of the limits by no means implies that it is not adequate for examining the research question. The discourse analysis will be applied for it is the most appropriate method of research for investigating

the research question which main interest is in hidden or subtle discourses of racism. The aim is to analyze how the discourse is constructed, the kinds of rhetorical recourses used. In addition, this method is complemented by in-depth interviews and data gathered from a survey with Roma youth.

4.4 Chapter Concluding Remarks

This chapter provided an in-depth view on the approach and rationale for the research methodology. Secondly, it outlined the research design and process in details carried out during the fieldwork and finally it elaborated on the merits and limits of the selected approach. The next chapters present the findings and analysis of the research.

PART III - RESEARCH CONTEXT

Part III of the research thesis focuses on the context of the research. The subsequent Chapter VI sets the context in relation to the Roma communities in Albania by providing an overview of their situation in terms of social inclusion, policy on education, employment, health and housing as well as participation and political representation. The contextual background on Roma communities serves to understand the community better, but also to set their communication rights and needs into the concrete perspective of their reality.

CHAPTER V - THE ROMA COMMUNITIES IN ALBANIA: STRUGGLES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

5.1 Roma communities in Albania: Resilience in a Struggle for Survival

5.1.1 Overview of the Roma communities in Albania

Roma⁴ are one of the minority groups living in Albania and are considered as a language minority. Unlike other ethnic groups, Roma and Egyptian communities do not have a particular historical homeland they can identify with, and therefore, no diplomatic representation or bilateral agreements to support them and promote long-term economic and cultural exchanges. Roma are officially recognized through the Romani NGOs that have a judicial status in Albania (Kanev, 1999). Nevertheless, Roma are not recognized publicly as a distinct minority. Only ethnic communities with existing kin-states were recognized, which was not the case of the Roma, who have no kin-state (Courthiades, 2000). Roma live all over the country, but the biggest communities are concentrated in and around Tirana, the towns of Fier, Gjirokaster and Berat, and around the town of Korce (ERRC Report, 1997: p. 8).

The Albanian Institute of Science, Open Data Albania project, in 2013, carried out an historical analysis of Minorities in Albania and stated that: *‘Statistical data on minorities were collected from different sources, mostly publications of the Institute of Statistics, the Directorate of Statistics and different reports or documents of the Government of Albania’*.⁵ Currently Albania acknowledges two groups of minorities, those who are considered national ethnic and those who are considered cultural and lingual minorities. The acknowledgment of the existence of the minorities has been an evolving process over time. The collection of data on their existence, the methodology employed to collect such data and even the concept of minority has also evolved. According to the latest 2011 census, the population of Albania was officially 83 percent Albanian, 0.9 percent Greek, 0.2 percent Macedonian, 0.01 percent Montenegrin, 0.3 percent Aromanian, 0.3 percent Romani, 0.1 percent Balkan Egyptian, 14 percent no declared ethnicity and 1.6 percent not relevant. The results of the Population and Housing Census were contested by minority representatives, including some Roma and Egyptian associations, as not reflecting

⁴ Roma, Romanies, Gypsies. Their name in the Albanian language is Rom (official) and Arixhi, Gabel, Magjup, Kurbat (derogative), and in the minority language their name is Rrom and Rroma.

⁵ For more see Albanian Institute of Science, Open data Albania project, Minorities in Albania, 2014, <http://open.data.al/en/lajme/lajm/lang/en/id/673/Minorities-in-AlbaniaDate> , accessed 01 August 2014.

the reality on the ground. Data collected through the Census should not constitute the exclusive source of information for the development of the legal and policy framework on minorities (EC Report, 2013).

Acknowledging the importance of a full Roma and Egyptian integration in the framework of the obligations set out in the Stability and Association Agreement with the EU, the Albanian government drafted a strategy for the economic and social integration of the Roma communities (Government of Albania, 2003). In addition, in 2008 Albania became part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005 – 2015), a 10-year endeavour for their integration into the European mainstream societies. There are no complete and accurate statistics regarding the number of the Roma population in Albania; however, according to the representatives of Roma organizations in the country, and studies made by independent institutions, the figures range from 90 to 120 thousand.

Most of the Roma reside in urban and suburban areas of the cities. Some of the major problems faced relate to:

- Low level of education - low rates of registration in schools and the rapid spread of illiteracy within Roma.
- Poverty and unemployment - many Roma families live below the poverty line and unemployment rates in the Roma communities are much higher compared to the rest of the population.
- Poor living conditions - many Roma families lack safe housing, sanitary conditions or supply of potable water.
- Insufficient health services - some areas inhabited by Roma have no access to health service providers and/or the Roma population can not pay for health services or medicines.

The general living conditions of the Roma are very similar in all regions where they are settled. Many areas inhabited by the Roma are informal and do not have essential facilities such as sewage systems, waste removal services, supply with potable water, or proper road infrastructure while most of the dwellings are transitory, unsafe and unable to sustain weather changes.

Roma and Egyptians in Albania, influenced by socio-economic factors, have had a higher population growth compared to the majority population. Girls are married at a young age and become mother earlier than in other ethnic groups. Due to the high birth rates, the Roma and Egyptian communities has a younger average age compared to the general Albanian population. The average age of the Roma communities is 25.6 years old, while for Egyptian one is 28.7 years old. However, empirical data show that during the last decade, fertility rate has been lowered. The average household size is 4,6 members for Roma and 4,2 members for Egyptians and has decreased compared to some years ago due to the lowering of fertility rate and internal and external migration (UNDP Report, 2012: p. 2-4).

The interest and attention for the group of Roma and Egyptians in Albania has increased during the last decade. Furthermore the European Union (EU) has conditioned the accession process of Albania into the EU with the fulfillment of 12 political criteria. In this regard, the Recommendation No. 11 “Reinforce the Protection of Human Rights” is the criteria imposed by EU for Albania to take concrete steps to reinforce the protection of human rights, notably for women, children and Roma, and to effectively implement anti-discrimination policies. In 2003, the Albanian Government drafted the Strategy for the economic and social integration of the Roma communities (GoA, 2003). Moreover, in 2008 Albania became also part of the Decade of Roma Inclusion (2005 –2015), a 10 years attempt to integrate the Roma in the general European mainstream (ERRC, 2010).

The protection of Roma Rights and the Monitoring of the objectives of the National Strategy and National Action Plan for the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2010-2015 remains the two main action pillars of Albania toward accession in the EU. During the post-socialist transition period the group of Roma and Egyptians in Albania, –as a consequence of the collapse and closure of state enterprises, their unilateral professional character, low level of education, and discrimination –passed from a relative prosperity to extreme poverty. Currently they are the poorest and marginalized ethnic group in Albania (World Bank study on poverty De Soto et al., 2002). The studies have showed that their poverty level is almost twice higher than the Albanians’ one and this situation has deteriorated.

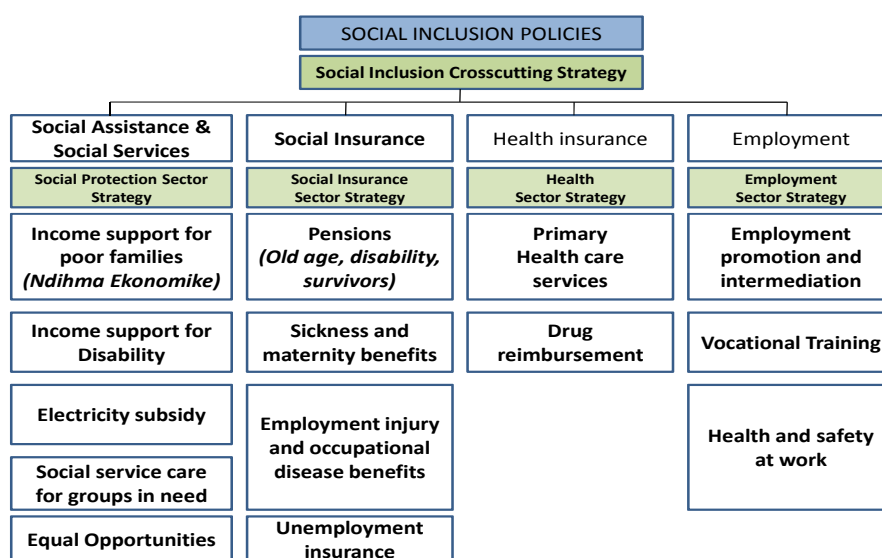
5.1.2 Social service provision and Roma access

The Albanian Government and Parliament have undertaken the Administrative and Territorial Reform in line with the national legal framework, Albania's international commitments to local government autonomy, and the best international practices for such a reform. The Administrative and Territorial Reform aims to increase the cost efficiency of local units, so that they can provide better services and make sure that citizens and communities enjoy more access to such services. Great fragmentation and the smaller units capacity regarding service provision have hampered the development of a democratic local government. The territorial consolidation shall enable the delegation of more services to the local government, which through larger local government units will have more capacity to exercise a greater range of functions and have a more opportunities to promote local democracy. The primary aim of this territorial consolidation is the establishment of economies of scale, absent up to now, which shall enable the larger local government units to provide more effective and cost-efficient services.

Social policies and interventions in Albania are characterized by an overlapping of authorities and competencies, which have resulted in a system that needs to be substantially reformed. This reform must solve all the challenges identified during the last 15 years and furthermore it has to be based on a highly detailed social and economic context, updated with the latest statistical and administrative data. The social protection system is mainly

based on the "ratification of damage" and not on active inclusion. There is large institutional ambiguity - although social care institutions were decentralized in 2006, they are still financially and operationally dependent on central government. In terms of social issues, the central government is responsible for developing policies and monitoring their implementation.

Figure 13: Social Inclusion Policies



More specifically, it licenses social service providers and defines the standards and criteria that govern the provision of these services. On the other hand, local authorities reflect the objectives of the legislation on social protection, and the respective policies and procedures in their local strategies, programmes and budgets. The economic aid and other cash benefits are financed by the state budget, but they are transferred to the beneficiaries through local government units pursuant to the criteria defined at central level. On the other hand, they identify the persons in need of social care and services, by timely planning their needs followed by requests for funds.

In the framework of the priorities of social protection policies, social services decentralization and de-institutionalization are the main processes of the social service reform. The financial decentralization and the ability of local government units to develop and implement regional policies, and the cooperation of the latter with the civil society are some of the greatest challenges. The central government must support and guide local stakeholders in their new tasks related to planning, providing and managing social services, by making available for them adequate needs assessment tools, by planning social service decentralization, and monitoring the strategies at local level - a problematic link of strategy implementation in Albania.

There is the urge to further consolidate, clarify and divide the role between the

central and local government on planning, financing, delivery and monitoring of social services at bottom-up level and vice-versa for each service and targeted client. The unclear division of tasks, competences, responsibilities between the local and central government could jeopardize the system of social service delivery. The provision of specialized services for groups/individuals in need very likely will remain at the bottom of priority list of politicians. When it comes to the provision of public health services in Albania, several studies and reports, including feedback from meetings during the project, reveal that Roma citizens perceive themselves as being subject to discrimination. A large percentage of Roma people feel that differentiations are made in the provision of public health services such as medical services, housing, education etc, and this also leads to self-exclusion of Roma people from accessing public health services. Nevertheless, further studies are needed to better explore the factors for Roma's low rate in seeking medical and education services.

CSOs working with the Roma and non-Roma must work more strongly and in a more coordinated matter to advocate together towards local government social services departments and agencies to guarantee access and equitable public service both for the Roma and non-Roma to ensure that access is provided in a non-discriminatory way to the most vulnerable, marginalized, poor people. CSOs should work with the Roma communities to encourage reporting on corruption cases they face in the social services system. Furthermore there is a need for more educated young Roma communities members in the field of social services including specialisation on employment, housing, education, medicine and healthcare management.

There is a need for concrete plans and mechanisms to facilitate co-operation between the Roma communities, local government units, business communities, schools and health centres in order to develop a local plan for social services and employment opportunities of the Roma communities. The establishment of the Regional Social Funds in the whole territory of Albania will remain in the focus for follow-up of the CSOs that provide social services. Policymaking and decision-taking bodies need to reassess the role of CSOs to provide services. They need to undertake legal steps and allocate the resources to ensure sustainable partnership between the government and CSO sector at all levels. Particular emphasis should be on the financing of social services delivery CSOs with public funds. The CSOs should demand their right to be part of the decision-making and be sustainable partners in the planning and delivery of social services. The demand and efforts of the CSOs should be aimed at facilitating effective and equal access for all those who need appropriate services social care. This approach should be in tune with the challenges of social policy in Albania as follows: effective intervention to ensure sustainable social protection; further investment in skills development and human capacity in order to improve their ability to integrate into society and the labor market; social protection systems to respond adequately to people in need.

5.2 Roma Media: Joint Responsibility towards Social Inclusion

The main focus of the European Commission regarding Roma communities is the health, education, housing and employment (European Commission, 2011). The underlying topic of the priorities set out relates to the narratives and discourses and structural conditions in order to improve Roma living conditions. As a result, it is also important to focus on improving the communication, especially the communication between the Roma communities and the local community. In order to achieve a better communication they have set up several approaches. The European Commission recommends Member States to adopt these approaches or to develop their own approaches to Roma integration (European Commission, 2012: p. 14). The approaches are as follows:

- a) Adequate support programs for the social integration of the Roma following the principles ‘explicit but not exclusive targeting’ and ‘aiming for the mainstream’. This approach allows the integration of the Roma to be sustained and it reduces social tensions (European Commission, 2012: p. 24);
- b) Permanent plans aimed at fostering a climate of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion in the neighbourhood (European Commission, 2012: p. 24);
- c) Developing joint projects, between countries/regions of origin and countries/regions of destination, in order to support migration according to required standards (European Commission, 2012: p. 43).

Nevertheless it is the responsibility of the Member State to improve the Roma integration and every Member State can decide which approaches they will use in order to achieve a successful integration.

The Commission launched the “for Roma with Roma” transnational awareness-raising campaign. It aims at fighting anti-Roma stereotypes through working with media, promoting cultural understanding, and organizing school drawing competitions and supporting twinning projects between local authorities. Anti-Gypsyism as a specific form of racism, closely related to deeply rooted stereotypes and stigmatization of Roma, is on the rise (EC Assessment Report, 2016). It is related to increased radicalization and extremism in the EU. It is crucial that public authorities distance themselves from racist and xenophobic discourse that targets Roma and effectively criminalize anti-Roma rhetoric, hate speech and hate crime. It is important to realize that a reluctance to act also contributes to the acceptance of intolerance in societies.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU, 2011) confirms that the EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies primarily targets education, employment, healthcare and housing. They also state that the media’s role has not been properly taken into account. EBU has identified and pushed forward requirements such as promoting the Roma culture, boosting media literacy and improving the trust between political institutions and Roma representatives. Furthermore, The Commission (2011) has set up a booklet, which describes how to combat anti-Roma prejudices and stereotypes through media. This

booklet identifies the problems that need to be resolved in order to socially include the Roma communities. They identified the following problems: first, the language of the journalism is dangerous and often too loose which can lead to xenophobia and even incitement to ethnic hatred (European Commission, 2011: p. 5); second, the media fails to make connections with the Roma communities as well as their sources (European Commission, 2011: p. 5); third, there is a lack of context, background and fact-based analysis which means that stories are often being half-told, therefore it is almost impossible for the non-Roma people to understand the lifestyle of the Roma communities (European Commission, 2011: p. 5).

In addition, the United Nations Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination have set up several objectives. With these following objectives they would like to improve the relations between non-Roma and Roma communities by promoting tolerance and overcoming prejudices and negative stereotypes. The objectives are as follows:

- a) Develop educational and media campaigns in order to educate the non-Roma people about the Roma society, culture and life (European Commission, 2011: p. 17);
- b) Facilitate and encourage access by Roma to the media by including television, newspapers and radio programmes; as well as training the Roma journalists and creating their own media establishments (European Commission, 2011: p. 17);
- c) Raise awareness among professionals of all media to not spread prejudices and make them avoid reporting incidents where individual members of Roma communities are involved, in that case the whole community shall not be blamed (European Commission, 2011: p. 17);
- d) Using media to encourage self-monitoring methods in order to avoid discriminatory, racial or biased language (European Commission, 2011: p. 17).

Moreover the EC has developed 10 guidelines that should be taken into account when telling a Roma story, because it can improve the social inclusion of the Roma communities through media. The guidelines are outlined in Table 7 below.

Table 15: EC Guidelines on Media Coverage of Roma Communities

<p>Guidelines for media professionals on how to cover Roma communities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maintain professionalism; 2. Stories are personal and not ethnic related therefore avoid generalization and simplification; 3. Stereotypes and prejudices are not evidence-bases and they must be banned; 4. Choose right words and images and be objective; 5. Enhance credibility of media; 6. Inform the positive stories to the public; 7. Media monitoring should be a long-term and regular process; 8. Consider the consequences of inaccurate information; 9. The voice of the Roma must be heard: involve Roma as sources and write their personal stories with them; 10. Develop strong connections with the Roma communities and civil society
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5.3 Establishment of Roma media in South East Europe

In the 1970s, a network of community radio and television outlets was established as Roma Media. Researchers and social activists have defined it as a vital resource to preserve Roma identity, language and culture, as well as the best tool to empower Roma communities and improve Roma representation in the mainstream media. Moreover, after the fall of Communism in the 1990s, Roma media was instrumental in influencing the way information about the ethnic community was processed. Print media are not optimal for a Roma audience because of the high rate of illiteracy among Roma communities. Print usually reaches only the Roma elite. Broadcast media, radio and television have a broader reach within the Roma population. Broadcast outlets can also provide for audience inter-activity and community participation in programming. Until the beginning of 1990s, only a few programs on the Roma existed, and most of them were in the former Yugoslavia. A couple of magazines were also published by Roma non-governmental organizations. Currently, there are around 25 Romani production and broadcast outlets in the field of radio and television, not including those produced by private mainstream media, and dozens of magazines published by Roma NGOs.

A number of organizations have supported Roma Media and Roma initiatives. They assist key Roma community broadcasters (radio and television) as well as news agencies and press centers in Central and Southeastern Europe. Assistance supports program development, training and infrastructure, program exchange and co-operation among Roma broadcast outlets, news agencies and press centers. The assistance has also helped improve relations and cooperation between Roma and the mainstream media. The primary supporters of the common program for Roma media are the Open Society Institute and Medienhilfe. These organizations have reached an agreement for the coordination of their support by establishing a program and a common fund. Over the past ten years, these two organizations established and developed Roma media in Eastern and Southeastern Europe. The support program provides direct assistance to Roma broadcast media representing key local Roma community outlets operating in the Roma language. The Network Media Program of the Open Society Foundation and Medienhilfe launched the Roma Media Co-Production Fund in mid-2005 and its goals were:

- To strengthen co-operation between Roma and mainstream media, both nationally and internationally, in order to improve coverage of Roma in mainstream media and thereby positively impact on attitudes towards Roma inclusion.
- To reinforce the Roma media's informative and educative role for Roma and non-Roma communities.

The evaluation process has offered encouraging results, suggesting that the CpF has been successful, both in terms of increased production quality and higher audience impact. Some

coproduction from Macedonia, Romania and Serbia were broadcast, in some cases with several re-runs, by dozens of local, regional and national mainstream radio and TV stations. Radio coproduction reached Serbia, Macedonia and Slovenia; while TV coproduction reached viewers in Bulgaria, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. CpF managed to bring across new, positive image of Roma to mainstream audiences. Audience feedback via telephone, SMS, and e-mail messages was mostly positive.

Figure 14: Radio Co-Production Projects

Radio Cerenja and Radio Stip (Macedonia) - “Information – Weapon against Exclusion”:

Six radio features of 10 minutes each. Topics: The Decade of Roma Inclusion (what is it, how it is supposed to impact on people, national action plans, funds available, etc.); The Decade’s pillars of education, health, employment and housing. Two radio documentaries about Esma Redzepova of 30 minutes each. Broadcast only on Radio Cerenja and Radio Stip; total audience around 20,000.

Radio Nisava and City Radio (Serbia) - “Prejudice Is Ignorance”: Sixteen radio analysis pieces of 10 minute each; topics: Who are Roma?, Decade of Roma Inclusion, education, employment, housing, and the final program, “How much more?” Broadcast on additional 17 stations, including one with the national coverage; distributed to NGOs on e-mail lists; made available on the own website. Total audience over 500,000.

Radio Tocak and Radio Patak (Serbia) - “When I Say Roma/Gipsy, I Imagine...”: Ten radio documentaries of 8-15 minutes. Each explores one of the most widespread stereotypes about Roma, explores reasons for their existence among non-Roma, and offers facts to combat them. Broadcast only on Radio Tocak and Radio Patak; total audience around 25.000.

Radio Tocak and A-Media (Serbia) - “Do We Want This to Happen to Us?”: Twenty radio features of five minutes, each presenting one concrete example of discrimination against Roma in various sectors of social life. Victims of discrimination speak themselves, accompanied by

Self-sustainability is difficult for any local radio station in Central or Eastern Europe, especially for a local station, which focuses on a marginalized minority. However, there is an expectation, mostly among donors, that Roma media should be sustainable in the market. The Open Society Institute, the major contributor, withdrew its funding in 2006. Currently, in Central and Southeastern Europe, Roma Radio faces increased and serious funding problems and is struggling to survive. Its obstacles include the following factors:

- The output of Roma media is not commercial and therefore not market-sustainable.
- Advertisers do not see Roma as consumers and do not advertise in Roma media.
- There are no local mechanisms for public and private funding for non-profit media projects, and Roma media are almost fully dependent on foreign grants.
- There is no legal framework that would encourage corporate funding.
- With no stable and sufficient funding for programming costs and equipment, Roma radio outlets are poorly developed and struggle at the edge of survival.

In such situations, prolonged grant decision-making procedures or delayed payment can have catastrophic consequences. The example of Radio Cerenja (Macedonia) illustrates this. Four years of successful programming development, which served as an exemplary

model for community-based radios in Macedonia, were annulled by a six-month delay of donor support. Almost all staff left the organization and the information program was reduced. Its interactive education program was terminated. For the Roma media to survive, legal measures may have to be taken. To help the stations, they could be exempted from license fees, their coverage area could be increased, and they could be provided with state subsidies for programs that serve their community. However, there seems to be little interest among donors to support Roma media. Also, Roma media face strong discrimination by advertisers and ad revenues often do not cover half of operational costs. Finally, in many donor countries, minority media are not and cannot be considered media businesses.

5.4 Chapter concluding remarks

This chapter set the context in regards to the Roma communities by looking first at the Albanian context and then by examining the Roma media in South East Europe and the European guidelines on Roma and media. However, the case of the Roma communities in Albania will be detailed in the following chapters.

PART IV – FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This part entails the findings, analysis and discussions and is structured as per the research aim and research questions. Chapter VI addresses the positioning of alternative media by examining them in a relational status vis a vis mainstream media and dominant policy discourses. This chapter also highlights the heterogeneity of Roma communities. Chapter VII addresses the potential contribution of alternative media by analysing the following: first, exploring the media usage of the Roma communities and their communication needs, second, analysing the features of alternative media platforms for Roma communities and their categorization as alternative; and third, by identifying merits and limits of alternative media to counter marginalisation and empowerment. Chapter VIII tackles the second research question on a possible balance between technological innovation, media policy and media settings in order to allow for a shift from access to participation and empowerment of marginalized communities through alternative media. Chapter VIII has two sections: one on the challenges posed to the development of alternative media for marginalized communities in Albania in terms of media content production, technology, distribution and organization and the second on media policy settings and values that will enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media towards social inclusion.

CHAPTER VI – ROMA MEDIA AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO MAINSTREAM

6.1 Roma communities in Albania: Dynamic, complex and diverse

Roma are one of the minority groups living in Albania and are considered as an ethnic-language minority. Unlike other ethnic groups, Roma communities do not have a particular historical homeland they can identify with, and therefore, no diplomatic representation or bilateral agreements to support them and promote long-term economic and cultural exchanges. There are no complete, accurate and undisputed statistics regarding the number of the Roma population in Albania. Most of the Roma reside in urban and suburban areas of the main cities: Tirana, Durrës, Fier, Elbasan, Korça. The results of the Albanian census of 2011 include figures of 8,301 Roma and 3,368 Egyptians, amounting to 0.3 and 0.1 per cent of the total population, respectively (INSTAT, 2012: 16). Unofficial estimates of the number of Roma in Albania range from 80,000 to 150,000 (i.e., between 2.5 and 4.7 per cent of the total population), while Egyptian NGOs estimate Egyptians' numbers at more than 200,000, 5.2 per cent of the total (REF, 2015; Fresno, 2014).

Roma live throughout the country, with the largest concentrations in central and Southeastern Albania. Most of them adopt a sedentary lifestyle, but some are mobile (nomadic) or semi-mobile. To what extent Roma communities in Albania adhere to the code of defilement is hard to be estimated not only due to lack of reliable data, but also due to lack of in-depth and systematic research and an anthropology studies using ethnography, participatory and action research as methods to explore the culture practices and lifestyles of social groups. The general living conditions of the Roma are very similar in all regions where they are settled. Many areas inhabited by the Roma are informal and do not have essential facilities such as sewage systems, waste removal services, supply with potable water, or proper road infrastructure while most of the dwellings are transitory, unsafe and unable to sustain weather changes (UN Report, 2012). Roma communities are among the poorest; most marginalized and socially excluded groups in Albania. Studies show that the level of poverty among Roma is twice as high as the majority population (UN Report, 2012). Low level of educational attainment, high unemployment rate, low monthly incomes, extreme living conditions and direct and indirect barriers in accessing public services are indicators that prevail in the majority of Roma.

In public discourse in Albania, as in other countries, Roma are primarily defined in a mixed narrative between their marginalization (the policy framework includes them in the all-encompassing term of vulnerable groups) as well as their peculiarity as a minority group (code of defilement, different ways of life, nomadism or mobility). This is related to the visibility of their marginalisation and shared history of discrimination. The Roma have been the subjects of various policies of assimilation and integration in Europe and have

often been perceived as subjective to state authorities for their distinctiveness from majority population. Similar trends can be traced in Albania as well. As a result the Roma have often been portrayed as a “*problem*” that needs to be solved and especially more so with the European Union’s Eastern enlargement, including the case of Albania as we will analyse below. As the alleged “*Roma problem*” has constituted an issue of debate for sometime now, the plight of Roma acquires new political, cultural and social dimensions in our contemporary society and in line with the European developments. First, a more thorough knowledge on Roma communities is needed. Second, it is important to deconstruct the common approach of labelling Roma as a homogeneous group to be targeted by social integration policies. Third, a contextual understanding of the complex dynamic Roma collective identity formation both at the local, state and international level is needed.

Studies have shown that there is a paradox of Roma identifications that varies in a continuum between strong assertions of Roma identity to complete negations. These forms contradictory identifications might account for the Census results in Albania in 2011 regarding self-declaration as Roma. This diversity of Roma identifications challenges the necessity and adequacy of policies targeting Roma as a homogeneous ethnic group as well as that of a homogenous social category. Bunescu (2014) argues that the heterogeneity of Roma identifications is not random, but that it follows certain context-specific patterns. Within the same Roma groups in Albania there is a tendency for differentiated and fragmented self-identifications; while at the state level and international level, there is an opposite tendency that blurs differentiations and emphasized a more homogenous collective identity of the Roma. The findings (Fraser, 1992; Kenrick, 1998; Hanckok, 2002) indicate that Roma identifications are contextual and more often than not they represents means in the struggle for resources available within different structural contexts. These different facets of Roma identity are also instrumental for gaining a better standing in local, state and international arenas.

6.2 Policy Discourses on Roma: From Normalisation to Inclusion

Policies towards Roma have shifted in a continuum from normalisation approach, to Roma integration and more recently towards social inclusion and human rights based approach. Analysis of concrete policies demonstrates that the first approach has been that of normalization (Fresno, 2014; Bino, 2013). As such policy makers at local and national level conceived Roma policies from the perspective of the so-called “*the Roma problem*”, meaning that Roma were perceived as a problem and therefore Roma policies should aim at solving it (Fresno, 2014: 22). As a consequence of this normalisation approach, the policy measures sought to normalise “*the Roma*” and make them as the rest of the society (Bino, 2013). The result of this approach is the increasing hostility against the Roma fuelled by the political discourse blaming the Roma and sometimes even using them as scapegoat in order

to distract from political failure (example in France, Hungary, Italy). Recognizing the major pitfalls of such approach that failed to fully acknowledge and respect the Roma as ethnic communities with particular cultural practices, language and lifestyles, the policies shifted towards “*Roma integration*”, meaning primarily that public institutions and others need to teach the Roma how they should be integrated and how they should act in society (Fresno, 2014; Bino, 2013). Integration policies seek to integrate Roma, without coercion, into the majority society while protecting their individual rights.

Table 16: Policy Approached towards Roma

	Coercive	Rights-Based
Roma Treated as a Separate Group	Exclusion	Minority Rights
Roma Treated as Individual Members of Broader Society	Assimilation	Integration

Source: Fresno, 2014

Integration policy can be either needs-based approach, i.e. mainly aims to bring social benefits closer to the disadvantaged group, or rights-based conception, which is founded on justice and equality and aims to end and compensate structural racial discrimination. Current integration policies combine antidiscrimination and social justice on a multiculturalist framework in varying ways, but the needs-based approach seems to be favoured (Fresno, 2014; Mirga-Kruszelnick, 2015). The term integration is still to some extent linked to the notions of normalization and assimilation, as Kymlicka (2007: 147) puts it: “*integration is a two way street. It requires a willingness on the part of the minority group to adapt to certain features of the mainstream society. But it equally requires a willingness on the part of the majority to accept the minority as equal citizens*”. When translated into policy, the integration approach entails an extension of already constituted institutions and practices (such as social services such as housing, health care, education etc.) to people not currently benefitting from them enough (marginalized communities such as Roma), and thereby expecting them (the Roma communities) to conform to the hegemonic norms (the way of life of majority) (Young, 2007; Kymlicka, 2007). Nonetheless, integration is still one of the key terms in all-current international, national and local measures for Roma social inclusion. In some cases it is thus implied that integration is a tool towards inclusion and in others the terms are used interchangeably, although integration or inclusion potentially refers to two distinct public policies.

Inclusion policy implies a set of activities aiming to bring social justice to groups considered disadvantaged and asking for a more active and open mainstream society (Fresno, 2014; EC, 2011). Despite the vagueness of inclusion, it has come to be considered as crucial to social justice policies for vulnerable groups, including ethnic minorities. If the targeted vulnerable group has also a different culture such as in the case of Roma

communities, the adequate inclusion policy combines social justice, anti discrimination and multiculturalism, designing a participatory structure which accommodate diversity in a different way that autonomy or self-government. While integration implies a process whereby “*the targeted groups of this policy are enfolded in a single public sphere with a single discourse of the common good*” (Kymlicka, 2007: 147), the inclusion approach accounts for participation and negotiation of power relations between the marginalized communities and the majority. The inclusion approach does not entail that the social outsiders, i.e. the Roma communities, are welcomed to adapt to a society already designed by the cultural majority and left only to comply by integrating (Young, 2007). The inclusion approach envisages a process that includes original input from those to be integrated, i.e. Roma communities are enabled to set their terms, express their views and negotiate their status, degree of ‘integration’ and ‘adaptation’. Therefore inclusion policies shall not lead to any form of assimilation as this understanding contradicts the right to identity. An optimal inclusion means not only ‘integration with-out assimilation’, but would encompass forms of political participation. Thus linking the politics of redistribution to the politics of identity and recognition.

Previous analyses of the policy approaches in Albania in regards to Roma communities (Bino, 2013; UN, 2012; Fresno, 2014) have demonstrated that they have followed the same trajectory as in other South East European countries, i.e. from normalisation to integration and currently to social inclusion. The primary push towards the salience of Roma in policy development in Albania has been and currently is the EU integration and accession process through the mechanisms of conditionality. In addition, human rights concern and the empowerment of various Roma groups have pressured the GoA to introduce policies targeting social inclusion. In this context, the institutions both at central and local government level have become increasingly involved in addressing the situation of Roma communities in Albania, but the discussion about what exactly the government should do for the Roma has been long and complex. The GoA has largely followed the policy approaches of the European Union as well as other international organizations working on this area (Council of Europe, United Nations, World Bank, Open Society Foundation, Regional Cooperation Council). Through the method of enlargement conditionality, the EU has promoted the protection of minorities in the accession states as well as candidate countries such as Albania. This has led to double standards for policy on Roma in new member states and candidate countries compared to ‘old members’ of the EU, which have not been the subject of the conditionality (Bunescu, 2014). As a result, across Europe different approach on Roma can be identified.

Therefore currently the policy approach on Roma in Albania draw from the EU approach on fostering social inclusion through a complimentary approach of human rights and social inclusion methods. While the human rights approach resonates with the work of CSOs and community activists to protect the rights of the minorities (national, ethnic, linguistic, sexual, etc.), it does not provide the resources need to empower marginalized

communities such as Roma. In addition the issues of socioeconomic disparity continues to loom large, so it is clear that a social inclusion agenda for the Roma has become necessary in Albania as in Europe. This represents a very complex and difficult policy area, whereby issues of recognition and redistribution need to be accounted for and addressed.

On the one hand, Roma endure economic injustice, as many are unemployed and excluded from economic life meaning that material deprivation and poverty are major issue of concern. Moreover, those Roma who do find work are exploited in the labour market, carrying out low-paid, unsecure and menial jobs. In order to remedy economic injustice, a politics of redistribution is required to ensure that individuals are protected by the state and have the opportunity to pursue gainful employment. Following the EU and other international or intergovernmental organizations, the GoA frequently deploys the language of 'inclusion' and 'equality of opportunity' when attempting to address economic injustice (European Commission, 2008; European Council, 2009). On the other hand, Roma suffer cultural injustices due to the negative ascription of Roma ethnicity by mainstream society. Roma are thus constructed as thieves, beggars, and parasites that do not 'fit' the rest of society (McGarry, 2010). The public discourse, whereby media play an important role, manifests in practices such as anti-Roma rhetoric and contributes to (re)production of marginalization.

In this light, cultural injustice moves beyond the individual and requires a politics of recognition, which is based on the validity of a group as a whole that retains dignity in its own right. The politics of recognition speaks of group-differentiated rights such as preferential treatment, which is enacted to redress cultural injustice and attempts to reaffirm the value of group identity. As opposed to equality of opportunity, it is based on equality of outcome, which must be tailored to meet the collective interests of the Roma communities. In turn, these communities have to be conceptualized, as they actually are, very heterogeneous, diverse, complex and dynamic. The politics of recognition relates to more difficult and intangible issues such as identification, collective or group identity, cultural practices and heritage, language, folklore and other dimensions that form the backbone to the Roma communities.

The current policy approach of the GoA does not address the politics of recognition in particular and pursues an ethnicity-blind approach to minority protection more generally. The primary attention, maybe rightly so, is placed onto the socio-economic integration of Roma, particularly in the fields of employment, housing, health and education, which fits with the politics of redistribution approach. These are also the priorities of the AP. The AP does not ignore cultural heritage all together, but is of relatively secondary importance also in terms of budgeting. However, this ignores the prejudice that Roma endure because of their ethnic identity, culture and lifestyles (code of defilement).

First, even well-intended national social policy measures targeted at addressing issues of vulnerable communities may miss their mark locally, i.e. the Roma communities, if national and local authorities, both governmental, civil society, education sector, media

and private sector do not engage and commit to social inclusion. Second, the policy will not succeed if the Roma are still portrayed as “a problem to be solves”, “outsiders”, a “burden on the welfare state”, a “security problem”, or a “problem of social deviance”. What is more, each stakeholder in the process needs to take full responsibility and commitment for social inclusion. As such if the national mechanisms envisaged in the policy documents and action plan of the GoA are to be catalyst for local social change for the Roma communities, they need to find a delicate balance between human rights implementation and social inclusion strategies, i.e. between politics of recognition and that of redistribution.

6.3 Media Landscape in Albania: A Symbiotic Interrelation between Media, Politics and Businesses

After the collapse of communist regime Albanian media had to redefine their role in society within a different economic, political and social circumstances. During the communist regime, Albania had a state/party controlled media landscape with the radio and television and print media outlets controlled by the Communist Party and its other affiliated organisations such as trade unions, state institutions or professional organisations. In the aftermath of the communist regime collapse, Albania adopted new legislation on media to replace restrictive media laws and settings; communist media outlets disappeared and a new generation of journalists were being educated (Londo, 2013: p. 3). Scholars identify two main phases of Albania media development in the past twenty-five years: (i) the first phase of *politically engaged media* with severe conflicts between the media and the government, open confrontation between journalists and politicians and a rise in the media power in the society; (ii) the second phase of *clientelistic media*, marked by a subtle interdependence and interrelation between media, politics and business. Media in Albania is experiencing economic and political pressure, issues of transparency and ownership, labour relations and working conditions, ethical concerns, professionalism and quality. Thus the development of media in Albania in the past two decades has not been linear; rather it echoes a dynamic, rich and diverse media landscape.

The media market in Albania is weak, small and fragmented, far from consolidated, if media market consolidation is possible at all, and thus in perpetum transformation. The Albanian press covers politics, economics, sports, culture and a large variety of other topics through publication of daily newspapers, weekly or monthly magazines, gazettes etc. However, the levels of readership in Albania, as is the trend in other countries, are relatively low due to inadequate print distribution infrastructure, a weak subscription system, high prices, and competition from audio-visual media and more recently from online media platforms. The exact figures of readership levels in Albania are debatable due to lack of reliable data (Halo, et.al., 2015). In terms of audio-visual media, there is a dual

broadcasting system, with the Albanian Radio Television (rtsh) as the public service broadcaster and a thriving private media as shown in Table 1. The public broadcaster Albanian Radio and Television (rtsh) has the greatest reach: its signal covers 80.5 percent of the territory, followed by Top Channel with 79 percent and TV Klan with 78 percent. Public radio signal covers 80.5 percent of the territory, while those of Top Albania Radio and +2 Radio, both national commercial radios, cover 93.7 and 68 percent respectively (Londo, 2013: p. 53). There are no systematic and reliable data on audience share of audio-visual media in Albania.

Table 17: Types of Media in Albania

Type of media in Albania	Number of media operators
National daily newspapers	26
Monthly Magazines	36
Quarterly Publications	69
Public Service Broadcaster	1
National Commercial TV Channels	2
Local TV Channels	71
Cable TV Channels	83
Public Service Radio	1
National Commercial Radios	2
Local Radios	63
Commercial Multiplex	2

Source: Likmeta (2013); Audio-visual Media Authority, AMA Report 2014.

The dynamics of the online media market and digital processes in Albania are difficult to be evaluated due to the lack of credible and systematic data and research. However, the growth in Internet access in Albania, at least in urban areas, is omnipresent as well as access to ICTs such as tablets and smartphones. Online media in Albania feature the main characteristics of new media: (i) hypertextuality; (ii) interactivity; (iii) multimediality; (iv) digitality; and (v) virtuality, i.e. media convergence.⁶ First, almost all media outlets, both

⁶ *Hypertextuality* refers to texts interconnected with links in the world wide web;

Multimediality refers to the application of multimedia in online content, which can be seen as the combination of information offered in different formats, produced in different sections of one or more media organizations; *Interactivity* refers not just to two-way mode of communication, but to multiple modes of communication as well as participatory communication. In addition, interactivity refers to the active role of audiences, users, netizens in producing media content and the importance of user generated content for the online news media;

Digitality of online journalism has to do with the digitalization of media outlets and content;

press and audio-visual, have their own website and some with versions suitable for smart phones in the forms of APPs. The websites serve not only as an online platform for the printed version of the newspaper or the audio-visual broadcasters, but they also include live coverage of events and allow audiences to participate with comments on news articles and reports.⁷

The most prominent websites of mainstream media, such as that of Top Channel, Shekulli, Panorama, MAPO, Ora News etc., include not only texts and photos, typical of printed press, but also convergent media formats, such as video and audio, multimedia, etc. The sites also include blogs and galleries and thus increasing the participatory aspect, which is limited in traditional mainstream media. Second, a large number of other online media platforms has emerged mainly news sites, entertainment, sports, culture and lifestyle sites (Londo, 2012: p. 11). The positive side of the online media in Albania is that there is diversity of information and content provided to and created by the public, represented a variety of interests and standpoints. As a consequence, online media in Albania, as elsewhere, have the potential to contribute to democratization through the participatory, open and multi-way communicative spaces (Londo, 2012: p. 13). Despite the opportunities for participation and diversity offered by online media, the concern about quality of information and impact still persist. Further research is thus needed to assess the impact of digitalisation in Albanian media, journalism and audience attitudes such as news consumption.

The small size of the market hinders media financial sustainability and as result media ownership and transparency of media funding are controversial issues in Albania media landscape. Issues such as media's cross-subsidization from other businesses of their owners, the owners' relations to politics, allegations of politically allocated state advertising, and the influence of big commercial advertisers have all led to doubts on media standards and editorial independence (Londo, 2013: p. 54). The size of the media market in Albania cannot be accurately assessed due to the lack of public data on media funding. However, in line with the media trends in Europe, it is argued that print media is going through unprecedented hard times to survive the competition with audio-visual and online media, which are gaining ground. Despite potential rise of advertising and the opportunities offered by ICTs, media outlets in Albania are not profitable businesses on their own and thus cannot ensure their financial sustainability. As argued by various media experts "*most media are supported by other businesses of the media's main shareholders, or through clientelism with government and political parties, which display a strong tendency to use*

Virtuality of online journalism has the effect to break down barriers of space and time and allows individuals to share information, ideas and experiences at a very fast speed; See Deuze, M., (2003) 'The web and its journalism: considering the consequences of different types of newsmidia online', *New Media and Society*, Vol. 5, No.2, pp. 203-230 and Porter, E., (2004) 'A Typology of Virtual Communities: A Multi-Disciplinary Foundation for Future Research', *Journal of Computer Mediated Communication*, Vol 10, No. 1, pp. 1-22.

⁷ Particularly Top Channel is a good example of a media convergence case study.

these media as a tool to promote and protect their interests.”⁸ So, the media market is also characterized by what Zielonka and Mancini (2012) call a *fuzzy ownership*. For instance, use of the media by their owners to gain political capital is a common phenomenon. Also the model of ownership is that of media owners with interest in other businesses, no media expertise, and limited transparency of funding and with the aim of political engagement or using media as a tool to court political actors and exchange mutual benefits. In this vein, the major challenge of media in Albania is clientelism, which directly influences media professionalism, its independence and quality of information provided to the public and thus the role of the media in the society.

The media landscape in Albania is also characterized by political parallelism, a mutual and close relations between the political and media systems. Political parallelism in Albanian media is primarily evident in the case of media content and bias, media funding and advertising as well as in the career paths for journalists, which are shaped by the political affiliations (Londo, 2013; Halo, et.al., 2015). Media content mirrors the division and polarization of the political system, which can be traced in the processes of news selection, framing, tone of coverage, and selection of sources of information. The political agenda predominates over standards of media professionalism for news coverage and topics of public interest, also leading to self-censorship. Albanian media exhibit external pluralism. There is a wide range of media outlets reflecting different perspectives and interests. However coverage and access varies from one media to another and it is hard to identify features of internal media pluralism⁹. In addition, media funding and advertising is also to a large extent dependent on the media relations with the government and powerful political actors. What is more, an increasingly popular trend in Albania is the move of media professionals from journalism towards governmental positions. Political parallelism in Albanian media is intertwined with business parallelism and therefore the argument put forward by Rupnik and Zielonka is highly relevant, i.e. the existence of “*a symbiotic, informal, obscure set of relationships among the media, politics and businesses circles with a continuous overlapping of their functions and interests*” (2013: p. 11).

This symbiotic interrelation between media, politics and businesses is also reflected in delays and deadlocks in media legislation or what is defined as floating laws (Zielonka & Mancini, 2013). The Albanian Constitution introduced (in 1998) and guarantees the freedom of expression, but media scene is poorly regulated. On the contrary, the audiovisual media legislation has undergone several changes in the last decade. The first law on audiovisual media passed in 1998. Catching up with Europe and adopting European standards on media legislation and policy remain driving forces despite the problems in media development in the country. Foreign assistance by international actors has been

⁸ As quoted in Ilda Londo, “Limited assistance for limited impact: International Media Assistance in Albania”, Regional Research Promotion Programme Working Paper 2, (2013), pp. 1-63.

⁹ Albanian Association of Municipalities, “A monitoring of the local election campaign coverage by mainstream media”, Tirana, June 2016.

provided¹⁰ and the EU integration processes have also served as a driving force towards improvement of media legislation. For example, the new law on audiovisual media started to be discussed in 2008 and was approved only in March 2013 in line with the EU Audiovisual Media Services Directive. In addition, the Strategy for Digital Switchover was drafted in 2005, but was approved only in May 2012. The floating laws situation is related to the media policy development. As such the EU Progress Report on Albania for 2015 noted, similar to previous reports, that progress on audiovisual policy has been slow. First the work of the regulatory body (AMA) has been hindered by political deadlock and difficulties in electing its members. Second, the delay in digital switchover is another concern as the deadline for June 2015 was not met and there is no specific action plan on how to move substantially forward in this regard (EC Progress Report, 2015). As a result of the legal uncertainty, the informality of the media sector flourished. The media legal framework and policy in Albania have not paved the way for media development, they have rather responded to existing and fast advancements of media landscape in reality.

Professional journalism in Albanian media is not developed at the desirable levels and the impact of civil society for a public interest in media is weak. The three pillars of professionalization of journalists according to Hallin and Mancini are: autonomy, professional norms, and public service orientation. Journalism education provides the fundamental towards maintaining high journalism standards. However, during communist regime there was no proper journalism education in Albania. It was introduced only in 1992 within the Faculty of Philology and History at the University of Tirana. Journalism education faces similar constraints as the rest of the higher education sector in the country such as lack of contemporary teaching methodologies, limited library resources, limited meaningful internships and work placement, quality teaching and research. Apart from formal journalism education, media professionalism in Albania has not benefited from other actors such as the civil society or media professional organizations, which have been weak and even instrumentalised by political or economic interests (Londo, 2013: p. 57). Very few media have code of ethics in practice and self-regulatory mechanisms are largely unfamiliar to media management and staff. The lack of self-regulatory mechanisms echoes the lack of public interest in media. In addition, media professional associations and trade unions have been recently established and are yet to be consolidated and to serve as actors of their own in media landscape.¹¹

Although the relatively low level of professionalization of journalism hinders the overall quality of media in Albania, it is very challenging to maintain high standards of professionalism. Journalists and media staff work in inadequate conditions, labor relations are problematic, they have low salaries, jobs are not secure with employment contracts, and

¹⁰ For more on foreign assistance to media development in Albania with detailed analysis see Ilda Londo, "Limited assistance for limited impact: International Media Assistance in Albania", Regional Research Promotion Programme Working Paper 2, (2013), pp. 1-63.

¹¹ For example, the Union of Albanian Journalists, led by Aleksander Cipa and the Female Journalists Association, led by Eni Vasili.

the life-work balance or gender mainstreaming are not covered by specific policies or practices.¹² Other factors negatively influencing journalism professionalism are the threats to and harassment of journalists, financial instability, ownership concentration of the media, market pressure, lack of editorial policies and absence of well-established ethical codes (Halo, et.al., 2015). There is also a disparity between the degree of professionalism in the media at the national and local levels, the latter receiving less research and policy attention.

6.4 Public Service Media in Albania: Universality, Diversity and Quality?

The Albanian Radio and Television¹³ (rtsh) is the oldest audio-visual broadcaster in Albania. The history of rtsh dates back to 1938 with the establishment of Radio Tirana, followed by the establishment of the Albanian Television (TVSH) in 1960 with limited timeframe of broadcasting. From 1993, rtsh also broadcast through satellite and used to be an important source of information for Albanians living and working abroad in the early 1990s. Since the first news bulletin in 1963 and till the collapse of the communist regime, rtsh was totally under the control of the state, i.e. the Communist Party and rtsh was the only electronic media available in Albania as there as a ban on all foreign channels. In the first years of post-communism, rtsh maintained its monopoly over the media market in Albania until 1995, when the commercial television market started to emerge and it also served mainly the government and political party in power.

One of the central and most challenging reforms of the media system in Albania in the aftermath of communism and towards the establishment of democracy and European integration has been the reform of state broadcaster to a public service broadcaster. The public mission is set in the rtsh remit in the Law no. 97/2013 on Audio-visual Media in the Republic in Albania. Article 91 stipulates that “*rtsh is committed to the high ideals of the national public service broadcasting; rtsh provides quality radio and television broadcasting in order to inform, educate and entertain the public by serving the nation, all social groups, including national minorities; rtsh is committed to an unbiased coverage of national and international news; rtsh provides programming that reflect all the variety of Albanian life in order to enrich the mental and spiritual world of the public*” (Londo, 2013: p. 67).

The research shows that the media legislation and policy in Albania have not been driven by the public interest, but have been affected by specific interests of certain political, economic and media actors. The media legislation and policy have not been developed based on a clear vision and strategy for the future development of media and in line with

¹² For more on working conditions of journalists in Albania see Blerjana Bino, “Gender mainstreaming in Albania media organizations”, UNESCO and Union of Albanian Journalists, (2013).

¹³ Radio Televizioni Shqiptar – rtsh

the increasing demands of the public in lieu of the digital society. Media legislation has been introduced after already existing media realities such as commercial media, digital broadcasting, online media etc. Therefore, the media policy processes has been influenced by the powerful and well connected media actors, who pursue, rightly so, their economic and political interest, rather than the public one. The lack of strong advocacy for the public interest in formulating media policy and legislation is also linked to the weak civil society and poor organization of media community and associations.

Albania has a dynamic, rich and diverse media landscape with about 250 audio-visual media outlets, 26 print media and growing number of online media. However, there is a lack of systematic and credible data on newspaper circulation and readership as well as no official audience measurements. In addition, there are no reliable data regarding the market share of each media in Albania and this makes very difficult the attempt to position its media and their performance in the media market in Albania. Currently there is a diversification of sources of information and external pluralism is achieved. The emergence of online news media is a positive development in this regard. Also, compared to other institutions, media enjoys higher level of credibility in the public. However, media still reflect the polarization of the political system and it covers mostly political topics thus contributing to the political invasion of public life in Albania.

In terms of policy discourse, elites in new democracies such as Albania have proclaimed the guarantee for media freedom, but in practice they have retained mechanisms to control the media. This control – aiming agenda of political elites is reflected in the processes of transformation of audio-visual media from state to PSM. There is a lack of political will to support PSM and public authorities have not ensured the appropriate operation of PSM. This is even more concerning when considering that civil society, media organizations and the public have proven too weak to influence the process and put pressure on the government regarding the role and function of PSM.

Media integrity is still a major issue in Albania even though formal transparency of media ownership has improved. Transparency of media funding is limited. The size of the advertising market is also not publicly available and there is a lack of data. The main concern in here is the distribution of government advertising to media outlets that favor the government in content and programming. The symbiotic relation between media, politics and businesses is a continuous source of concern regarding media professionalism and independence. Currently the media in Albania can be characterized as clientelistic with direct or indirect political and economic influences combined with lack of self-regulating mechanisms and journalism professionalism. These factors impact directly the sustainability of media outlets, which in turn is reflected in quality of content and professionalism. Nonetheless, media in Albania has grown fast and significantly with some media groups leading the way to quality programming and innovative technology and embracing the challenges and opportunities offered by the proliferation of ICTs. rtsh has the vast coverage of the territory in Albania at 87% of the country or 90% of the

population. The switchover to digital broadcasting the situation is expected to change positively in terms of coverage of signal, however the process is delayed.

The editorial independence of rtsh as the public broadcaster is guaranteed by law, but not in practice. The remit of rtsh specified that rtsh would adhere to the impartial coverage of local and international news. In practice, rtsh, under political pressures, serves as the client of the government. Other political parties and the opposition are covered by the news and public affairs programmes, but the frame, tone, type and length of coverage is not adequate with a clear bias towards the government. Self-regulating mechanisms are scarce, while self-censorship is widespread.

rtsh based on its remit and specific objectives should provide diverse programming for all interests and perspectives. rtsh is the only one audio-visual media offering programmes for minorities such as in Greek, Macedonian and Romani language through its regional centers. It has enriched its programming in the past years covering a wide range of topics and adopting programme formats similar to commercial television, thus risking to fall into the trap of tabloidization in an effort to attract more audience. At present, rtsh fulfills only partially the requirement of the public service broadcaster to be accountable to the public through a board representative of society at large and selected in an independent, open and transparent manner. Although the law allows for a wide range of associations to propose members for the Steering Council, in practice the election of members reflects the political positions and preferences of the key political actors.

The transformation of rtsh from a state-owned media to a public service broadcaster has been challenging. First, the transformation of rtsh is a process not set in vacuum, but in the particular political, economic and socio-cultural context in Albania. The struggle towards democratization, polarized party system with severe opposing standpoints; unwillingness for compromise and consensus; disregard for public interest and EU-conditioned reforms are some of the key features of the Albanian political landscape that have also impacted the transformation processes of rtsh. Second, despite improvements in media policy and legislation and increased funding for rtsh, some key constraints still persist: political pressure on governing bodies of rtsh, content of news and current affairs and programming; weak editorial independence; serving as the client of the government and not adhering entirely to the public interest; quality of programmes and employment of advanced technology for improvement of programming; financial transparency and management of funds; professionalism and integrity. Third, the transformation of rtsh into a public service broadcaster in Albania comes at a time when the role of PSB in Europe is being redefined because of the proliferation of ICTs, advancements of online media, market liberalization and socio-cultural changes in society. Therefore, rtsh has to redefine its role not only against the not so enabling political and economic context in Albania, but also in light of the overall challenges to traditional PSB by the transformative factors mentioned above. Finally, rtsh has to regain the trust of 'its owner', i.e. the public in Albania. For this to happen a public and inclusive debate on the future development of rtsh

is needed.

6.5 Legitimation for alternative media: Challenges of Public Service Media in Albania on Representation of Roma Communities

This section will look into public service media landscape in Albania in terms of allowing for, or facilitating the participation and empowerment of marginalized community. The first part will look into the role of PSM in representing Roma communities and the second part will discuss the limits and underpinning reasons regarding marginalised communities coverage, representation and participation in mainstream media.

There are two main phases regarding the PSB development in Albania: (i) from the fall of the communist regime in 1992 to 2000, whereby there was no significant private audio-visual media market in Albania and the rtsh enjoyed the privileged status and having the biggest influence. However, it also inherited the legacy of being a mouthpiece of the government. The challenge was to transform rtsh from a tool of propaganda into medium for information and entertainment for all citizens, by introducing new editorial policies, new programmes and focusing more on informative function. At that time rtsh played a crucial role in the promotion of the opposition in Albania, and rtsh ended up positioning itself as the mouthpiece of the new government formed by the first opposition party in Albania, the Democratic Party, 1992. (ii) In the late 1990s and early 2000, with the introduction of new law on media that liberalized the market, new commercial outlets were established and they mainly attracted human resources of rtsh. With the consolidation of the private media market came the decrease of the rtsh's lauded positioning the Albania media market.

Nowadays rtsh is not the most significant medium in terms of audience, but it is important due to its technical inheritance of full coverage of the country's territory and widespread positioning of transmitters. rtsh has also played an important role in the late '90s during the Kosovo conflict as it also broadcasted outside of the Albanian borders at a time when there was no widespread internet access or digital broadcasting.¹⁴ A future, third phase of development of PSB in Albania ought to seek to achieve three main goals: first, a rebalancing of the media market in Albania, with an increased audience and interest on the public broadcaster and not just the private media. This would enable a new balance between public and private media in the market and therefore allow for more competition between media outlets, better quality of content and programme and higher standards of professionalism. Secondly, the transformation of rtsh would be an added value to the Albanian media market in light of the new information and communication technologies that have affected the audio-visual mediums. Third, this transformation would be in favour

¹⁴ Interview with former Director General of rtsh, Tirana, May 2015.

of citizens of Albania, the real “owners” of the rtsh, who so far have only paid the bill without getting benefits in return”.¹⁵ The transformation of rtsh implied more quality of content and programming, higher professionalism and a balanced media market, which in turns benefits the public, who pay for the licence fee or rtsh.

Albanian Radio Television played a crucial role in the democratization of the country from 1991-1998, when there was a boom of private media and the media market in Albania started its transformation.¹⁶ rtsh had a pool of media professionals, programs, and technology in place as well as its legacy that contributed to its important role during the 1990s. It also served as a platform for the professional development of key journalists and public figures, who started their career at rtsh and then moved on to private media. During this period, the rtsh attempted to adapt to the new political and social landscape of the country, and opened up to new codes of communication and professional conduct. However, at this time there was a clear political parallelism, i.e. rtsh was an instrument for the political party in power, being constantly criticized for this until nowadays. rtsh was affected in a negative way by professional drain of media professionals who left rtsh to join private media, and the lack of quality and competitive programming. Private media opened up their communication codes to other sources of information, rtsh uses mainly official sources of information and thus limited quality of content is offered to the public. Thus rtsh performed as a closed medium, a platform to voice the officials of the government more than of the public, civil society, experts, etc. rtsh also tried to diversify its program portfolio and include more entertainment programming, but it did not ensure a high impact on audience reach.¹⁷

Neither improvement of the legislation, and its adjustments in line with the EU Audiovisual Media Service Directive, did not change the practice and make the PSB operates more independently. The impasse and boycott of the process of selecting the Steering Council members or the Director General of rtsh is a clear indicator of the political affiliations and the pressure on editorial independence and professional journalism in the case of PSB in Albania. What is more, the regulator -- Authority on Audiovisual Media (AMA), that oversees the compliance of rtsh with the law, still lacks appropriate professional and technical capacities to ensure perform its duty in a full capacity. Even more concerning is the questionable independence of AMA itself as noted by one of the interviewees: “the political parallelism of AMA is reflected in the election of its members, whose profiles are linked with political parties even though the law does not allow this, and also in the politically biased decision making of the regulatory authority”.¹⁸ Consequently, self-censorship, viable in content and programming production, is common and widely accepted phenomena in Albania media landscape. In addition to issues of editorial independence in the newsroom, the staff integrity has also been debatable considering the

¹⁵ Interview with policymaker and media professional, April and May 2015.

¹⁶ Interview with policymaker and media professional, April and May 2015.

¹⁷ Interview with former Director General of rtsh, Tirana, May 2015.

¹⁸ Interview with media scholar, April 2015, Tirana.

usual practice of political appointment of staff in rtsh resembling the rotation of political parties in government despite their professional profiles and their media experience or interest.¹⁹ Also, the high profile managers and Director General at rtsh have also been allegedly accused of corruption and mismanagement of funds.²⁰ The union of rtsh employees is rarely active and the Council of Viewers and Listeners does not have capabilities to hold rtsh accountable to the public. Therefore, rtsh has not established an internal editorial independence and internal pluralism and while the law may envisage for accountability of rtsh to the public, in practice the mechanisms do not achieve their aim.

The operation of rtsh is hindered by the impasse in electing council members due to political confrontation on this issue. The Steering Council is suspected of being composed of members whose political affiliation overweighs their professional credentials and integrity in relation to the media and PSB. The new law on Audio-visual media, which was approved in 2013, did not solve this problem and the confrontation of the political parties led to a disagreement for the formula for the election of Steering Council members and Chair by the Parliament. The research shows that “even though the law requires individuals with extensive experience in media and related fields, with high integrity and professionalism, representation of various groups from civil society, in essence the members of Steering Committee are influenced by and linked to certain political parties and there will obey the party’s orders in decision-making”.²¹ For instance, the Parliament voted initially for the 5 members supported by the government for the Steering Council and only after some months of discussions, the other 5 members supported by the opposition were elected.

Another clear example of the political affiliation is the impasse in electing the Director General of the rtsh. The last voting was done in December 2015, but the Steering Council failed again to elect to the new Director General. As a result the role of the Steering Council in supervising and guiding the activity of rtsh is debatable. What is more the activity of the Steering Council is not transparent, none of its decisions are published and there is no available information of the rtsh official page regarding the Council. “Out of the eight years I’ve been serving as director of the Albanian public television, only in the first two years there was a serious discussion on rtsh accountability in the council. Even though my department submits reports on its work every six months, we do not have any feedback or extra requirements from the council”.²² The council has thus failed to take an active role in the performance of rtsh and in the fulfillment of its remit as a public service broadcaster.

The fulfillment of its public mission and the performance of rtsh is also affected by the relation of its three governing bodies and the lack of transparency in their operation.

¹⁹ Interview with former Director General of rtsh, Tirana, May 2015.

²⁰ There has been a high profile case of former rtsh director charged with corruption and mismanagement, but he was acquitted and proved innocent in the court. See Londo, 2013.

²¹ Interview with media scholar, Tirana, April 2015.

²² Interview with media scholar 2, Tirana, June, 2015

Rtsh media professionals argue that “the uncertainty in legislation over the years, the delays in approval of laws and bylaws as well as the overlapping of competencies between the governing bodies of rtsh such as the Steering Council, Director and Administration Board, create bewilderment in the daily work of rtsh staff and thus hampers the normal functioning of rtsh”.²³ For instance, the Administration Board, which by law is supposed to be a consultative body on financial and management affairs, has also served in practice as a decision-making body, particularly during the absence of elected Director General. Moreover, the decisions taken by each body are made available neither to the rtsh staff and structures nor to the public. Accountability and transparency are at minimal levels and what is more concerning is that the new law has not addressed the checks and balance mechanisms for the functioning of rtsh and its governing bodies.

The failure to establish editorial independence of the PSB in Albania is not only a result of the political pressures and symbiotic relations to the government, but also of an embedded culture within the institution to serve as a client to the government. Although there might have been no direct indications for news coverage, “the news and current affairs department at rtsh has adapted the tone and frame supposed to serve the interests of the government and the political party in power. This is obvious in cases immediately after the general parliamentary elections when there is a political rotation, which is reflected in the news and current affairs coverage of rtsh”.²⁴ The news coverage bias towards the government and lack of editorial independence fall short from meeting the public remit of rtsh and have been criticized by the opposition, parts of civil society and commercial media as well as international community, arguing for a public interest in rtsh. The failure to provide independent and impartial coverage of news and current affairs is even more sensitive during election campaign periods as rtsh does not fulfill its legal obligation of impartial and in the public interest coverage.

The research shows that rtsh has increased significantly its programming more in terms of covering topics related to education, entertainment, sports, culture and socio-economic and international rather than political and current affairs. For example, rtsh produces only one political talk show per week, while national commercial media and other private media have at least two major political talk shows per week. The priority of rtsh programming is not only news and current affairs, rather “it is social, cultural and economic programmes that cover a wide range of interests and perspectives not necessarily linked to political tones”.²⁵ rtsh is the only mainstream media that produces programmes for ethnic-national and linguistic minorities in Albania, i.e. its local branches broadcast in Macedonian and Greece for minorities in south and southeast and it also used to have a programme on for the Roma communities in their language. Nonetheless, reliable and systemic data on audience reach and penetration of rtsh are needed in order to be able to

²³ Interview with the Former Director of rtsh and current Director of RT, Tirana, May 2015.

²⁴ Interview with media scholar 2, Tirana, June 2015.

²⁵ Interview with the Former Director of rtsh and current Director of RT, Tirana, May 2015.

assess its performance and proclaimed achievements or shortcomings as perceived by the public. What is more, systematic content analysis of its news and current affairs programme is needed in order to explore the bias and framing of rtsh coverage. “rtsh has a considerable annual budget, guaranteed by the license fee and state funding, something that other media struggle with, and thus it is expected much more from its quality of programming, creativeness, professionalism and independence”.²⁶

“There is an implicit neglect of rtsh and the public interest in media with no leading political, academic or public figure advocating for the merits of public service media in Albania and thus for ensuring that public interest is at the fundamentals of rtsh functioning and performance.”²⁷ The situation of engagement of civil society and media associations and community has improved with their participation in consultation processes of media laws and introduction of amendments. Particularly, the Albanian Media Institute is a major actor in the civil society regarding media and public communication with a large number of publications and studies on media developments in Albania. Recently other organizations focused on investigative and quality journalism have been established and conducted assessment of media landscape in Albania. Such initiatives and organizations are positive developments in the media market in Albania. For the future development of PSB and the media landscape as a whole in Albania is it thus necessary to have an entirely transparent and inclusive media policy process with the involvement of relevant stakeholders. The public mission and interest in media, particularly in the case of rtsh, shall drive the process. The research confirms what has been suggested previously by media scholars and professionals that there is the need for a Strategy on Media Development, led by the public interest and contemporary changes in society and serving as a guide to future legislation and policy.

The transition of rtsh from a state-owned audio-visual medium during the communist regime to a public service media as part of democratization has proven particularly challenging in Albania in terms of social and cultural aspects. As argued by Jakubowicz (2004: p. 33) “the introduction of PSB in Central and Eastern Europe has either so far failed, or has produced very uncertain results, as PSB organizations lack social embeddedness and the right democratic context in which to operate”. When analyzing the challenges of PSB in Albania and its future development it is thus necessary to consider the socio-cultural context as well as political and economic structures. Similar to that of media systems in Central and Eastern Europe, the media system change in Albania has been subject not only to the structural and systemic political and economic transformations, but also to changes in social consciousness and culture. Therefore the introduction of PSB in these countries has proven particularly challenging and difficult to implement successfully. One of the main challenges was the establishment of democratic guarantees for freedom of the press and freedom of expression and of the media. Another was the introduction of

²⁶ Interview with media scholar 3, Tirana, June 2015.

²⁷ Interview with media scholar 1, Tirana, April 2015.

neoliberal reforms, as well as, attempts to catch up with developments in media and information technologies.

6.6 An alternative to mainstream media - (Re)production of dominant discourses of marginalization

As analysed above the public service media in Albania fails short of fulfilling its normative functions towards democracy in terms of universality of access and coverage, diversity of groups represented and quality of content and service. Nonetheless, rtsh has offered programming for the Roma communities, as it will be analyzed below, but without making it an editorial and content priority. In addition, limited space was allowed and mostly to tick the box of the legal obligations of rtsh. When it comes to coverage and representation of the Roma communities by the mainstream media, including rtsh, the research shows that between August 2013 and January 2016 a total of 76 media items have been covered in mainstream media regarding the Roma communities.²⁸ The vast majority of the topics covered by the mainstream media is framed as social news and are covered in the social news section, normally at the end of the news edition or last pages of newspapers. None of the media items made it as headline coverage for the period studies here, unless it was politically related news. A total of 14 stories or media items were assessed that covered Roma communities, but framed as political news, i.e. the center of the news or media material was a political leader and/or political party and the Roma communities was only secondary. In addition, the research found that the frequency of coverage of Roma in mainstream television is lower than in the press, for instance only 17 media items were broadcasted on TV, whereas the press covered more the Roma communities.

²⁸ See Annex VII for entire table on data on mainstream media coverage of Roma communities (Aug 2013- Jan 2016)

Table 18: Mainstream media item types on Roma communities

Media item type	Number
Report focused on Roma	7
Political news	14
General news/info	9
Social section news	45
Total	76

In addition, only a few number of media items were Roma centred and offering an in-depth analysis of the particular topic covered, only 7 out 76 media items in total. The main topic covered was housing and employment. Tab. 17 above is a representation of the clear differences between media items for Roma communities vis a vis other social groups or topics in society.

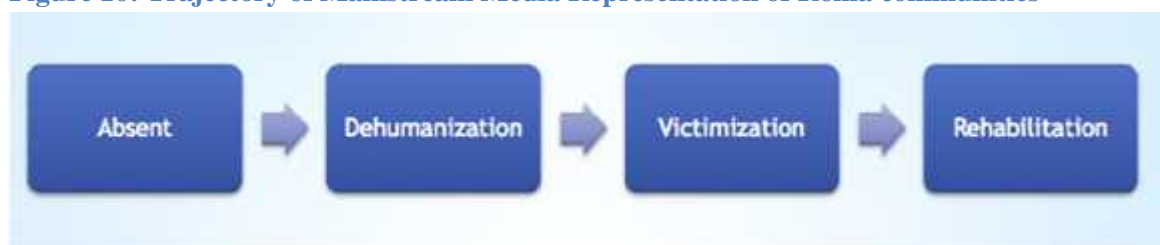
Drawing from the frequency of the media items and their types and looking into the discourse they articulate, the research shows that issues related to Roma communities are deemed as not newsworthy. This is a result of complex media landscapes and working practices as well as subtle benevolent racism. The research shows that there is a drop in the newsworthiness and media interest on topics related to Roma communities, unless it is framed as political media item with a clear political agenda. The research, through critical discourse analysis, also found specific trends of representation of ‘the other’, i.e. Roma communities, which are summarised in Fig. 1 below.

Figure 15: Representation in mainstream media of Roma communities

<u>Absent</u>	
<u>Dehumanization</u>	Anonymous Undocumented Voicelessness Being spoken for Not agent Beggars/thieves Undisciplined Anti social behaviour
<u>Victimization</u>	River bank Poor Illiterate Torn clothes No shelter Immoral Filthy
<u>Rehabilitation</u>	Educate Housing Pity Vulnerable Primitivism Tribalism

The representation of Roma communities in mainstream media has gone from absent, to dehumanization, victimization and rehabilitation as shown below.

Figure 16: Trajectory of Mainstream Media Representation of Roma communities



The critical discourse analysis shows that the Roma communities are primarily portrayed through three main frames: first, dehumanisation, which refers to the use of terms to

portray them such as 'illegal' or 'non-registered' or 'non-document' as well as 'living in the street'; 'sleeping under the bridge'; 'not clean'; 'moving by the river'. The second frame is that of victimisation, i.e. portraying the Roma communities as victims and main terms used in this case are: 'miserable', 'poor', 'extremely poor', 'not having a house', 'not working', 'immoral', 'danger to the others', 'troublesome'. Finally there is the frame of rehabilitation based on the benevolent racism approach.

These fixed representation of Roma communities in mainstream media are routine media practice and recreate stereotypes against them, misleading the viewers into thinking the social discrimination originates from the innate differences in racial backgrounds between the dominant majority and the 'others'. The research shows that the Roma in mainstream media, even in public service media, are mostly marginalised, homogenised and stereotyped against, in opposition to the complex context of their realities. In this way, as seen above in the methodology approach and conceptual framework, these discourses persuasively convey and legitimise Roma marginalisation and prejudices among the majority in society and thus form or confirm the social cognitions of 'Others'. Therefore the voice of 'Others' has an important role in indicating the relationship between minority groups and the majority. To sum up, even though the voice of 'Others' is quantitatively presented in news reports, that does not produce representation of them, but a representation of Us as superiors. This stereotypical generalisation forms an opposition structure of 'outsider' versus 'insider' and 'not normal' versus 'normal' strengthening the binary opposition relationship of 'Others' vs. 'Us'.

The research shows that the dominant approach in Albania has been that of refusing to acknowledge the existence of the 'other different' by claiming to be homogeneous society. In addition the main policy approaches have the normalisation approach and the integration one, which do not fully recognize the 'other' as a social actor. In this sense, the main issues hindering the development of alternative communication spaces for the marginalised communities in Albania: the attempt to patronize minorities by bracketing their complex identities and diverse profiles and attempting to make them more like 'us'; the reproduction of already existing negative perceptions and stereotypes of Roma and Egyptian communities through the mainstream media: (beggars, thieves, delinquents, a danger to the rest of the society, not educated, not cleaned etc.); very limited communicative spaces for the Roma communities to 'tell their version of the world' and create their own meanings based on their own terms, not those of the majority.

This research shows that the main assumptions of the reproduction of discriminatory discourse on development through media representation of the 'Other' are: (i) the dichotomy of 'us' versus 'they', i.e. 'us as' the majority Albanian society and 'they' as the Roma communities or other marginalised communities; (ii) there is one direction of progress and development, i. e. what the Albanian majority considers a normal course of evolution and progress has to be considered as the universal truth and all the rest of the groups have to embrace this course of evolution and progress; This is not only the case in

Albania, but it is observed in other countries, whereby the majority holds the monopoly of 'the truth'; (iii) the messianic claim of salvation of the Roma communities by normalisation and integration approach or the modernization of 'the other' by bracketing their differences and patronizing them; (iv) the paternalistic attitude of the Albanian majority and policy discourse towards the Roma communities, i. e the majority knows what is best for the rest of the society; (v) what is different is considered to be abnormal and the majority defines what is 'normal'. In order to give voice for political representation and participation for the Roma communities, alternative public sphere and communication spaces need to be developed. Alternative media could be one of the instruments to achieve this.

The research demonstrates that the discourse on 'Roma communities in the public sphere (re)produces and reinforces already existing aspects of social deprivation, marginalization and discrimination. The complex phenomenon is principally covered within the framework of human rights. The research shows that there are limited efforts to elaborate the concept of 'Roma' and that there is confusion in policy regarding the use of the term. In addition, the Roma communities are seen either as victims of socio-economic hardship and endangered by their presence in the spaces of the 'street' or as a possible threat to the rest of the society, i.e. the street criminalises children. The research shows two main policy approaches: (i) correctional or repressive-oriented policy approach that conceives Roma communities as a danger to public order whose features differentiate from mainstream society and as such invites intervention programmes that tend to 'normalise' them as in the case of the National Strategy for Improving the Living Conditions of Roma communities; (ii) protective or rehabilitative policy approaches, i.e. emphasising their needs and aiming at protecting and re-integrating them in family and mainstream society as demonstrated in the National Strategy for Children.

6.7 Underpinning reasons of the representation of 'Others' in mainstream media

Through in-depth interviews with media stakeholders, the research shed lights onto the underpinning reasons behind the representation of the Roma communities in mainstream media by looking at two main levels: first, the individual level of the news maker or the media professional covering a topic on Roma communities; second, the media organisational and institutional level. Although the declared purpose of the news is to reflect the general interests of a society, the news is not a mirror of reality because the reporters personal points of view can distort the contents (Tuchman, 1978; van Dijk, 1988; Schudson, 2003). It is a representation of the world, and all representations are selective as seen in the above sections. This means that some human beings must do the selecting;

certain people make decisions about what to present as news and how to present it (Schudson, 2003). The Washington Post columnist David Broder writes “the process of selecting what the reader reads involves not just objective facts but subjective judgements, personal values and prejudices” (Schudson, 2003: p. 33). Therefore, understanding the concept or value, stereotypes towards a certain group or issue at the individual level of media professional has important significance as it is closely linked to the tendency and direction of the news content.

On one level, this kind of stereotypical generalisation offers reporters or news makers a convenient means to ascribe certain key qualities to the main participants of the news discourse without encumbering the reader with tedious details; on another, the selection and repetition of a particular generalising attribute also hints at an underlying ideology that might have motivated the choice in the first place (Teo, 2000). Van Dijk (1987) explains this stereotypical generalisation as a concept of homogenisation. This is also related to internalised racial hierarchy in society or as analysed above the subtle benevolent racism towards the Roma communities. This functions as a reference point to classify ‘Us’ and ‘Others’ in news production. For example, the media professionals (reports, journalists) pose different questions when interviewing Roma representative. This is part of their practice of choosing to cover different news items depending on whether the people involved are Roma or not, which then related to the element of compassionate media professional.

One of the major themes of news coverage that features Roma communities as seen above is that of Roma in ‘miserable and extremely poor conditions’. This kind of news is limited to one-time reports when an incident happened, and is less in-depth than the actual or planned news coverage (for example news on the burning of Roma houses or the death of a small Roma child). Moreover, the simplified account of the incident might easily lead to a misinterpretation of the facts as well. Given that television news coverage links the report to strong visual images and sound effects, it has the ability to make a far more lasting and stronger impact than the same contents in a newspaper would. This is the reason why the reporters’ personal opinions can sometimes construct a whole new social reality. Therefore, the sympathy of media professionals towards Roma communities can be shown directly or indirectly through the news, and in this way their bias towards ethnic minorities can be reproduced.

In addition to the internalised subtle benevolent racism and compassionate reporting, the routines of news making and communication work in media settings affect the coverage and representation of Roma communities. As analysed above, the role of the news media in the system of racial discrimination is not limited to news reports or editorials, but already begins with routines of news making (van Dijk, 1988). Routines in the process of news production are defined as “patterned, routinised, repeated practices and forms that media workers use to do their job” (Schudson, 2003: p. 105). These routines are developed as a way to minimize the organizational risk of being involved in a libel suit and

to protect individual communication workers from criticism by their peers at an organizational level. Moreover, these critically influence decisions for major news items and the formula for such news reports among newsmakers and gatekeepers at an individual level. Therefore, understanding routines in the process of news production is crucial in connecting individual level and organizational level functions, as well as analyzing a definitive form of news representation.

Another reason is that of the limited application and understanding of multiculturalism and cultural diversity. Based on the in-depth interviews, media professionals are not educated properly nor training on the issues of multiculturalism and cultural diversity (one OSCE training of journalists to cover Roma has been done in 2012). Moreover, media professionals consider multiculturalism as it has to do with different cultures not within the Albanian culture and they take for granted the homogenized Albanian society and thus no room for multiculturalism. Therefore there are limited frames in representing the 'Others' and standardization of media representation. This is closely linked to the organizational level and working and time pressure on media professionals to produce media items and particularly news.

It is essential in studying the news-making process to focus on the organisational level because "although individuals and routines generally determine what gets past the gate and how it is presented, the organisations hire the gatekeepers and make the rules" (Shoemaker and Vos, 2009: 62). Studies have also found a correlation between the publisher's attitude and newspaper content and concluded "publisher attitude appeared to hold up as the greatest single 'force' operating within the news channel" (Chomsky, 1967: p. 67). This research shows the influence of the upper management and the government upon the news content in media settings as argued above about the symbiotic relation between media, politics and business in Albania. Their influence can be either explicit or implicit or even hidden from the rest of the employees. This influence is greater than the journalistic guidelines and norms of conduct. The situation becomes even more complex if it is added here the consideration of Roma communities as not a newsworthy topic. This is not particularly only of Roma communities media coverage, but also of other topics due to the high levels of politicisation of public sphere. In addition the focus on audience and advertising to generate revenue makes it even harder to explore in depth the Roma communities.

6.8 Concluding remarks

This chapter looked at the dynamics and heterogeneity of the Roma communities in Albania and their identity struggles as a way of setting the background for then analyzing the role of alternative media in countering marginalization through participation and empowerment. The chapter critically assessed the dominant discourses on Roma based on critical discourse analysis of texts gathered through document analysis. The research argues for the need to focus on inclusion policy as celebration of differences rather than on integration as becoming part of the hegemonic dominant lifestyle and culture. This dominant approach is also reflected and produced or reproduced by the mainstream media and the chapter analyzed the representation of the Roma communities in commercial and public service broadcasting in Albania. It shows that the Roma in mainstream media have gone from absent to presence, but the presence is problematic as it is offered mainly in terms of dehumanization, victimization and rehabilitation. In addition, the reasons why this happens are underpinned with the main hindering factor being the symbiotic relationship between media, politics and business.

CHAPTER VII: CONTRIBUTION OF ALTERNATIVE MEDIA TO COUNTERING MARGINALISATION THROUGH PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

7.1 Alternative media of, about, for and by the Roma communities

There is currently no particular legislation addressing Roma communication rights and need, apart from the provision of the public service media as stated above. In Albania, there are two Roma newspapers: *Ditet Tona* (or *Amaro Dives* in Romani), and *Yilli I Karavanit* (or *The Star of the Caravan* in Romani), both are published in Albanian. “*Ditet Tona*” is run by the “*Amaro Dives*” NGO which was close to the Democratic Party of Sali Berisha. The newspaper is issued every two months in four pages. *Yilli I Karavanit* is the organ of the “*Amaro Drom*” NGO and is also issued in four pages. According to the Albanian Human Rights group, due to financial difficulties, both newspapers do not issue very regularly. Recently with the wide spread of projects and activities on Roma more reports and media materials and dissemination activities are organised.²⁹ The state-own radio and television stations, except in sporadic cases, outcast the Roma from their programs. There is no continuous program in Romani in the electronic media as seen above. There is no TV in Romani in Albania. While till 2005 researchers reported that there were no web-sites of the Albanian Roma available, currently almost all Roma NGOs have their website.

There is currently an online Roma, *Kanxura Radio*, which is a participatory alternative media and will be analysed below. News stories covering Roma may sometimes be plagued by oversimplifications, stereotyped portrayals or scapegoating, with the rare and exceptional case of Roma seen in a positive light in everyday reporting. This same negative portrayal of Roma in the media is widespread in many European countries. A partial or misrepresented image of an individual behaviour involving a Roma individual can easily contribute to the construction of a negative social attitude towards Roma that has a major impact on the collective image of a people. Therefore, stereotyped information about Roma that is widely disseminated could affect the way journalists construct their stories thus perpetuating the criminal image of a minority.

Even for voluntary associations that aim to avoid hierarchy and are anti-authoritarian, some structure is necessary for their continued existence, such as the delegation of tasks. Second, when considering the publishing process, at least some degree of moderation, perhaps also editing, is necessary if the organisation is to survive the challenges having to do with open publishing. Third, failing to negotiate conflicting interests in an organisation can lead to two opposite outcomes, either closure or the birth of a new organisation. Fourth, a voluntary association needs to have a clear vision that is

²⁹ See Annexes: Data on Roma Projects in Albania and Data on Media Projects

acknowledged and accepted by the volunteers involved. The fifth point taps into what can become a great weakness for participatory media as voluntary associations. That is, an organization must not only have an adequate number of volunteers, but also their skills need to correspond with the tasks on offer. How many volunteers is sufficient depends greatly on factors such as the range of functions an organisation maintains, how much time and effort individual volunteers are investing in the organisation and how successful an organisation is in using effectively the resources at its disposal.

When considering a problem that reportedly is typical for the alternative media, that is, difficulties in finding a sustainable funding model (Atton, 2002; Hackett & Carroll, 2006) Radio Kanxura appears to be exceptions to the rule in the initial phase due to support from donors, but in the long run it faces the same challenge. However, by broadcasting online, this challenge is mitigated. On the one hand, this is because of both the low entry cost and the cost of running a media operation on the Internet whilst not maintaining an office, and on the other, because it has taken an approach where neither the people volunteering in a collective nor the reporters were paid for their contributions. To summarise, the case study provided interesting new insights concerning what affects the sustainability of participatory media as a voluntary model of association.

The alternative media scholarship has addressed several aspects of these media, from their ability to facilitate individual empowerment, their radical political aims and the organisational limitations typically having to do with difficulties in finding a sustainable funding model to their embeddedness in civil society and the ways they challenge mainstream media. However, as Atton (2008a) has argued, the ethical dimensions of the production of alternative media have been practically ignored. He has (2008b) also called for research on alternative media that moves away from their celebration as being independent from the constraints of mainstream media to exploring the connections between the two. The research employs the rhizomatic model of media, as formulated originally by Carpentier et al. (2003) and discussed also by Bailey et al. (2008), when analysing the cases of alternative media in Albania.

When using abstract models in empirical research, it is valuable to test their applicability in real life settings. In this thesis, the rhizomatic model of media (Carpentier et al., 2003) was found on the whole more accommodating than theories of alternative media. It allows the exploration of characteristics current in hybrid models of participatory media such as in this study. One of benefits of the rhizomatic model is that it allows addressing the varying degrees of embeddedness of different participatory media in the civil society, but also the connections they have to market and/or state. The findings in this research indicate that the risks the model puts forward in relation to commercialisation are indeed accurately identified, but only when they are examined in relation to a media organisation can we see exactly how they develop and why.

The social value of alternative media as developed so far by and for Roma communities in Albania is related to: first, they provide a response to the dual media

system and a response to increased concentration of ownership, i.e. the media landscape should be seen as a triple system with commercial media, Public Service Media as well as alternative media and communication networks. Secondly, alternative media have served the Roma communities, primarily youth, through provision of tailored information on issues of concern, as seen above on education, career, and intercultural exchange. Third, they are part of civil society and have facilitate activism and participation of Roma communities in the wider public spheres, but also provided a platform to cover all activities and topics related to Roma. This is related to the fourth merit, i.e. the creation and enhancement of networks of cooperation and initial steps of advocacy of Roma communities.

They have created alternative communicative participatory spaces for different Roma communities (community radio, newspapers, online video) and production of alternative discourses on Roma communities, their culture, lifestyles, daily issues (housing, education, health and employment) that counter the dominant discourses on these communities. The programming is focused on empowerment and positive messages and stories. They have provided media literacy education for Roma youth and community activists to develop their own mediums of communication. Finally, these alternative media have contributed to dialogue in multiple public spheres – Roma and non-Roma youth working together to develop these alternative mediums of communication – online/offline convergence.

Despite the contribution, major challenges still remain. First, producing stories such as media materials, news, reports, images, and videos by the Roma communities themselves has proven very challenging, as certain competences need to be further developed through education, leadership and role models. These alternative communicative spaces risk being self-isolating – with no one else listening but the Roma himself or herself. In addition, they are so far small-scale participatory media and have remained marginal. The rejection of professional organization processes of these alternative participatory media is on one hand a their fundamental feature, but on the other hand makes it difficult for them to gain public visibility and to establish broad counter-public spheres. They suffer from lack of resources and thus have problems with continuous production and reaching broad audience. In addition, the risk of advancing repressive or racist and discriminatory narratives is there. However, the major constrain is linked to the dominant discourses of ‘normalisation’ and ‘integration’, which then leads to a focus on socio-economic issues and politics of redistribution on issues such as: education, housing, employment, health and social services.

7.2 Roma alternative media and participation: From serving the communities to a rhizome between state and market

The resulting snapshot of alternative media in Albania for marginalized communities confirms that the sector is immature, new, prolific, uncertain and evolving, at times working to redefine what is even meant by alternative media in a particular cultural and social context such as the case of Albania. With the proliferation of ICTs, the alternative media are increasingly accessible, particularly for elite Roma participation and mainstream interaction. Another aspect is that of diversity and differences of purpose, as well as uncertainty, which are part of its essence, offering space for difference of opinion and delivery. This profile of the sector is necessarily a work in progress in its initial phase, reflecting its dynamic nature and lack of adequate policy framework. Importantly, the information encountered throughout this research on the histories and aims of alternative media outlets confirms the pivotal role they play as conduits of community information; in Roma activism; as mechanisms for debate and development of public opinion; in language-sharing; and as tools of resilience and education – all of which have long been recognized in literature too (Coyer and Hintz, 2010; Carpentier, 2011). The focus is on mapping those media outlets that fall within the alternative media conceptualization as outlined in the theoretical framework. Due to scope limitations, it has not allowed to include film, theatre, art, or the numerous associations that play a crucial role representing the sector, which would be vital to a comprehensive analysis. However, this scoping exercise does provide a picture of the dynamic, new and emerging trend of alternative media in Albania with a focus on marginalized communities such as Roma.

Figure 17: Typology of alternative media in Albania

Media products	Media processes
<input type="checkbox"/> Content - it is culturally and socially alternative to the mainstream and focuses on Roma communities needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Distribution - alternative sites for distribution, personal networks, anti-copyright
<input type="checkbox"/> Form - newspaper, online videos, online radio; new forms, convergence	<input type="checkbox"/> Transformed social relations - participatory processes, collective and volunteer organizations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Reprographic innovation and adaptations - use of a variety of methods, testing and trying new forms	<input type="checkbox"/> Transformed communication processes - horizontal linkages, networks, open management, participatory decisions making

Source: Author, 2016, adopted by Atton, 2008

Radio Kanxura and other alternative media platforms developed by, for, about and of Roma communities in Albania first and foremost serve the Roma communities. In here the relation between Roma youth, as founders of the Kanxura Radio, with the media itself is paramount. The audience thus is the Roma community itself, which it is referred to as Roma communities to acknowledge their heterogeneity. Therefore, in the case of Kanxura Radio as alternative media, there is no clear dichotomy between state and citizen or medium and audience. There is a transformation of social relations where audiences are actually producers too. Moreover, the aim of alternative media in this case – serving the community – is translated as enabling and facilitating access and participation by members of the Roma communities. As pointed out by one of the key actors of the Kanxura Radio: *“Roma youth and other members of community are given priority to express their perspectives and discuss issues that concern them. We discuss topics that matter to Roma and these are discussed by Roma themselves”*. In this regard, the main topics covered by Kanxura Radio relate directly to the emergent needs of Roma communities as listed below.

This empowers its members by signifying that their statements are considered important enough to be broadcast. Roma communities as societal groups that are represented one-sidedly, disadvantaged, stigmatized, or even repressed especially benefit from using the channels of communication opened by alternative media, to strengthen their internal identity, manifest this identity to the outside world, and thus enable social change and inclusion. As one of the participants in the focus groups puts it: *“mainstream media talks about us only on the 08th of April, which is the International Roma day or when a politicians comes to visit us or talks about us, this is not enough, this is not even done in a good manner. We can do our own media”*. The interesting point here is not only the alternative to the mainstream, but the emphasis on ownership of media production and management.

Table 19: Topics covered by Kanxura Radio

Access to health through the Roma mediator
Education of Roma youth as hope for an integrated future
Romani culture – a value that unites us all
Roma youth discuss early marriages: Are they really a Romani tradition?
Educational programme for youth and new academic year
How to effectively use online media?
Security of Roma communities
Roma voices through youth
Digital police station, policing and Roma communities
Inclusion of children
Cyber crime as a new topic of Roma
How to be concentrated during exam periods?
National Roma Youth – full coverage
Communication and intercultural dialogue
Messages from youth for Roma communities
Advocacy through media in the community
Anti corruption messages from youth
Mediator through online media
Roma and volunteering
Barvaliqe summer school on Roma cultural history and identity
Romani language club
Together against anti-Semitism
Interviews with school teachers and inters
Interviews with Roma mediators in Fier and Roskovec
Traditional Roma music and dance
Volunteers from Berati visit IRCA
Information for Roma and Egyptian communities on university quotas
Summer camp interview with students
Networking together
Roma Versitas Albania, interview with Emiliano Aliu, project coordinator of the program in Albania
Promotion of cultural heritage of Roma – Interview with crafts men
Promotion of Roma identity
Promotion of Roma young talent

Secondly, Radio Kanxura and other alternative media platforms developed by, for, about and of Roma communities in Albania, are an alternative to mainstream media. As argued by Bailey, Cammearts and Carpentier (2008), Carpentier (2011) and Atton (2002), alternative media introduces a distinction between mainstream and alternative media, in which alternative media are seen as a supplement to mainstream media, or as a counter-hegemonic critique of the mainstream. Alternative media in the case of Roma communities in Albania can also be seen as representing challenges to hegemony, whether on an explicitly political platform, or employing the kinds of indirect challenges through experimentation and transformation of existing roles, routines, emblems and signs at the heart of counter-hegemonic subcultural style. They are small-scale and express ‘an

alternative vision to hegemonic policies, priorities and perspectives’. As pointed out in the focus groups: “*We now have the opportunity to voice our own views in our own terms and understanding, without the conditions put by the big private media*”. Also, another media activist argues that: “*The priority for programming is set by our own views and needs of the community and emergent issues such as education or housing, depending on the topic, so we do not depend on bosses to decide about the programme and to cover it fully with politics*”. This points to the fact that alternative media do not suffer from the agenda-setting and newsworthy logics of commercial and public media. The participatory media production processes is a key empowerment element here as it provides the community with the power to create programming. This might as well create internal struggles and tensions that need to be negotiated.

Table 20: Characteristics of Roma alternative media

Domain	Examples of domain for Roma alternative media
Motive or purpose	Rejection of commercial motives Assertion of human, cultural, educational ends of the media Oppose the power structure in Albania society and demand Roma inclusion Building support and solidarity for Roma communities Work with civil society through networking and partnerships for better living conditions
Source of funding	No state or municipal funding so far Rejection of state funding in principle, but negotiable No advertising funds so far Business model is being developed Donor funding No membership fees or donations
Regulatory framework	No legal basis for alternative or community media in Albania Advocacy for alternative media as a third - tier media Independent and free Alternative to the mainstream
Organizational structure	Horizontal organization Full participation in media Democratization of communication Not professional, flexible and open
Stance towards professional journalism	Support and promote voluntary engagement Access, interaction and participation for non-professionals Youth media programming Newsworthiness dependent on relevance of topic for Roma communities
Message and content	Counter-dominant discourses Supplementing dominant discourses Expressing alternative visions to hegemonic policies of normalization and integration Focus on positive Focus on empowerment Education and literacy Serving the community
Relationship with communities or audiences	Participation and transformed social relations Allowing for needs and goals to be articulated by the audience, which is the Roma communities Democratization of communication
Audience composition	Young people and Roma youth Diversity
Diffusion	Online

As Fleras and Kunz (2001: 40) remind us: *‘Mainstream media are framed as a contested site of competing agendas whose inner logic, institutional values, and commercial imperatives induce a reading of reality at odds with the aspirations of those outside a mainstream orbit’*. Mainstream media are likely to construct and grant legitimacy to ‘leading’ social values through constant exposure of them to the audience. In this process mainstream media become ideological as they reproduce a constructed and preferred view of ‘reality’. In addition, they have the power to define which specific issues to bring to the public arena, and they become ideological by giving priority to the ideas of the main social actors such as the state, politicians, and private sector over the views of disfranchised minorities in civil society (Carpentier, 2011). Therefore representation in this political context becomes a ‘struggle for meaning’ and is an important source of social knowledge production.

Reality and its meanings are constructed within language, discourse, and representation within a specific history and culture. In discursive terms this means that representation not so much distorts reality as productively provides the means by which reality is actively constructed (Hall 1997). As Foucault (1980: 114) asserted, all power implies resistance and particular languages of power imply particular languages of resistance to that power. Alternative media thus have the potential to counter this language of power and produce their own version of reality. In other words, the mainstream media play a crucial role in naturalizing dominant forms of ‘common sense’. Nevertheless, marginalized communities such as Roma exercise their power to contest hegemonic meanings through a discursive practice of resistance that is, to produce non-conformist and sometimes counter-hegemonic representations of the views of those marginalized, misrepresented and under-represented in the public spheres. This is thus done through alternative media.

As alternative media are defined as being in a negative relationship with mainstream media, the contingency of this concept should be emphasized: what is considered ‘alternative’ at a certain point in time could be defined as mainstream at another point in time. Alternative media as analyzed here are: small-scale and oriented towards Roma communities with the principle of respecting diversity; they are independent of state and market; they are organized horizontally (or non-hierarchically), allowing for the facilitation of audience access and participation within the frame of democratization and multiplicity; they are carriers of non-dominant (possibly counter-hegemonic) discourses and representations, stressing the importance of self-representation and participation. As one of the participants in the focus groups reminds: *“We do not seek to reach the entire country and become sensational, we are here for the purposes and needs of Roma and our community. This is what counts. We are flexible and we discuss our decisions, we participate together and we organize together”*. This points to the difference from other media organizations. These differences emanate from the higher level of participation of Roma communities and the aim to provide space for those who traditionally have not had.

The orientation of alternative media towards giving a voice to various (older and newer) social movements, minorities, and sub/counter-cultures and their emphasis on self-representation, can result in a more diverse content, signifying the multiplicity of societal voices. In the case of alternative media in Albania, it has resulted in a wide variety of topics related to the needs of Roma communities as shown below.

Table 21: Topics and audiences of Alternative Media in Albania

Topic	Audience
Culture identity: Language, music, dance	Roma and non Roma
Intercultural coexistence: 'Know us before you judge us'	Roma and non Roma
Romani Language teaching	Roma
Education	Roma children and youth
Health	Roma villages, communities
Housing	Roma villages, communities
Election and political processes	Roma villages, communities
Media literacy	Roma youth
Career advise	Roma youth

The rejection of the production values of the 'professional' working in mainstream media leads to a diversity of formats and genres and creates room in alternative media for experimentation with content and form. Thus, these media organizations can be rightfully seen as a breeding ground for innovation, often to be eventually adopted by mainstream media. As can be seen by the programme and experiences shared by media activists: *"producing videos for Romani language to stream online was very rewarding as we had the possibility explore and do it in our own way"*. However, when alternative media are situated in an antagonistic relationship with mainstream media, alternative media may find themselves in a less advantageous position. Being small-scale, independent, and horizontally structured organizations carrying non-dominant discourses and representations hardly guarantee financial and organizational stability. The challenges faced by alternative media in the case of Roma communities will be analysed in full in the next section.

Third, Radio Kanxura and other alternative media platforms developed by, for, about and of Roma communities in Albania, are part of the civil society. By defining alternative media as part of civil society, these media can be considered the 'third voice' (Servaes 1999: 260) between state media and private commercial media. Providing a complementary alternative to both public service and commercial media. Furthermore, the technological advances in terms of network-based communication tools, digital cameras and compression techniques, have provided these alternatives with new means to distribute alternative content worldwide. As the Founder of Kanxura Radio highlights: *"Kanxura Radio is anchored at the Institute of Romani Culture in Albania, which is a Roma non-governmental organizations and was initially supported with funds and capacity development by UET Centre, also a non-governmental organizations working on issues*

related to human rights and social inclusion”. The participation is also key here. It implies the participation of Roma communities in the media content production and processes, but also the participation through alternative media in the decision-making processes. The extent to which they participate is challenging, for the second dimension.

Fourth, Radio Kanxura and other alternative media platforms developed by, for, about and of Roma communities in Albania, are conceptualized as a rhizome as outlined in the theory chapter. This implies that they are non-linear, anarchic and nomadic. The rhizomatic approach to alternative media thus focuses on three aspects: their role at the crossroads of civil society, their elusiveness, and their interconnections and linkages with market and state. The metaphor of the rhizome firstly highlights the role of alternative media as the crossroads of organizations and movements linked with civil society. The rhizomatic approach also allows the incorporation of the high level of contingency that characterizes alternative media. Both their embeddedness in a fluid civil society (as part of a larger network) and their antagonistic relationship towards the state and the market (as alternatives to mainstream public and commercial media) make the identity of alternative media highly elusive. In this approach it is argued that this elusiveness and contingency, which also apply to a rhizome, are their main defining elements of alternative media and also the main challenges. Like rhizomes, alternative media tend to cut across borders and build linkages between pre-existing gaps. As put by one of the media activists: *“We seek to serve our communities for a long time and if need be we will work with the government or the private sector or private media to develop further”*. This approach is also analyzed in the policy section below.

Table 22: Mainstream vs Alternative Media Discourses

Mainstream media	Alternative media
Absent	Present
Dehumanization	Humanization
Victimization	Agent
Rehabilitation	Empowerment
Accurate representation	Participation

If compared with the analysis of absence and presence of Roma communities in mainstream media, in the case of alternative media, the analysis show presence in stead of absence, focus on humanization, they are treated as agent in their own rights, empowerment is the key element as well as participation. In the following section the link to empowerment will be analyzed.

7.3 Alternative media and empowerment of Roma communities in Albania

The contribution of the alternative media towards the empowerment of the Roma communities can be unpacked based on the following main themes, which are analyzed by looking at the open codes and their properties through critical discourse analysis of the texts of in-depth interviews and focus groups. From the first theme, one can observe that the implication of empowerment here relates to the relational need of belonging, caring and supporting one another within the community through the use of the alternative media platform. Another example of this theme of belonging is that, in every description of the work with the radio, participants said “we” when referring to their daily activities. Participants used “we” when referring to even the most mundane activities.

Table 23: Empowerment - Theme 1

Theme 1: A relational need of belonging, caring and support	
Open Codes	Properties
Need to belong the community/group	"Stronger ties within the Roma groups" "Proud of our initiative" "Proud of our cultural identity"
Need to protect and care for all members	"We are here for those that are less advantaged than us" "We help them with study applications" "We share what we have...."
Supporting the members of community	"We give books for Roma pupils and organize orientation days" "We cover topics in the radio that make sense for the community"

The second theme is that of a shared experience of suffering and marginalization, which than relates to the hopes for a better future. The properties of the empowerment discourse here relate to three main issues: first, the shared experience of marginalization; second, the need to be united in order to become better off and the third, hopes for a better future, but the vision of what is better differ. The findings here point to the internal struggles and tensions regarding the vision for the future for Roma. For some, it means, “*we should be integrated*”, but for others it means, “*sticking strongly to our cultural practices and way of life*”.

Table 24: Empowerment - Theme 2

Theme 2: United in suffering and hoping for being better off	
Open Codes	Properties
A shared experience of marginalization	"We have all suffered, particularly our parents have sacrificed for us" "Proud of how far we have come" "We feel the same pain when some one is suffering as we have been there"
Need for unity for actions to become better off	"Education is the key for us" "Our programming can help us to be stronger together" "We should be more united"
Hopes for better future, different understandings	"Things will get better....the youth is promising" "We should be integrated" "We should strongly stick to our culture"

To discuss the idea of “empowerment,” one must also discuss what one is “empowering against.” The findings in theme 1 and 2 show that Roma communities’ resistance struggles against a hegemony of the proper public sphere or dominant society or normal way of life, which are discursively constructed by the dominant society and government power. These findings also point to the shared goal of cultural identity, even though there are internal struggles of what that identity should constitute of. As shown in theme 1 and 2 and in the table below on unpacking the concept of empowerment regarding the contribution of the alternative media, one can easily relate this case to what has been discussed regarding empowerment, i.e. empowerment is one’s ability to have control over the decisions that affect one’s life. So, the major contribution of Kanxura Radio as an alternative media is that it has empowered its participants by strengthening their ability to assert power in a relationship of unequal power.

At the personal level this can be traced by looking at the development of the sense of self and capacity. Roma participants argue that “*we are now enabled to run our own medium and this is so powerful and rewarding*” and that “*feeling better when you can share with others all the things that makes us different*”. At the close relationship level, empowerment refers to the ability to negotiate relations and influence decision-making.

Participants argue that participation in media production in Kanxura Radio has helped them to *“being heard, they call us for meetings like action plan of municipality”*. This also relates to alternative media as part of civil society, serving the community and at crossroads between the market and the state. This dimension of empowerment is crucial as it refers to the embedded participatory practices that allow for participation in and through the media in decision-making processes. The last aspect is that of the collective dimension and the creation of networks and alliances through participation in the alternative media. Here empowerment is not the ultimate goal, theme 1 shows that empowerment is also related to the support of the others, thus goes into the idea of broader human rights and social inclusion. It is not an end point; it is a spiral that relates again to access, interaction and participation.

Table 25: Unpacking empowerment of Roma communities

Dimension	Properties
Personal dimension of empowerment - Development of a sense of self and capacity	<p>"We are now enabled to run our own medium and this is so powerful and rewarding"</p> <p>"We can discuss topics related to our Roma traditions and culture"</p> <p>"Feeling better when you can share with others all the things that makes us different"</p>
Close relationships dimension of empowerment - ability to negotiate and influence relationships and decisions	<p>"Through IRCA and Kanxura we are now being heard, they call us for meetings like action plan of municipality"</p> <p>"We feel we can take part for things that influence us"</p> <p>"Negotiating and alliance building and networking is new for us but also important"</p>
Collective dimension of empowerment - working together to achieve impact	<p>"Roma NGOs are fragmented, but still associations are there"</p> <p>"We have created now Roma Youth Corpus to work together"</p> <p>"Collective action and media coverage of our actions through Radio Kanxura is important and it is working"</p>

The findings thus show that empowerment is the affirming of the dignity and value of one's own identity and re-evaluation of the local culture. These alternative media through their embedded participatory processes have contributed to affirm the Roma identity and to actually discuss, define and redefine what it means to be Roma and what is Roma identity, contextualized to the case of Albania. Empowerment in this case also means

the Roma cultural capital is given greater recognition and is seen as more valuable. This can be seen when Roma participants argue that: “*we are proud of our culture and we celebrate it and we inform the others about it through our programming*”. The signification is also important so that the price of changing power relations is not to give up one’s own identity. The most important aspect here is that empowerment is explicitly located within a broader framework of commonly agreed upon parameters of human and social equity, i.e. further support and caring for the Roma communities.

The logic of empowerment in this case shows a sense of urgency to use their power to serve others in a similar situation. The empowerment process can be used as an inclusive model to strengthen the possibilities to become an included and competent participant in society. Being included refers here to a feeling of belonging to a society and knowing that one can participate in the decision-making processes. Being included refers to feelings and experience, not necessarily to concrete action. A person who feels included knows how to participate, if he/she chooses to. Thus we should not presume that an included citizen always wants to participate and influence. The opposite situation for being included is being excluded. The excluded citizens are often called marginalized or dropouts. The possibilities of participation and influence grow in an empowerment process with increasing inclusion.

Across this research, certain core characteristics of alternative media have emerged:

- civil society ownership: ownership and control are ultimately in the hands of self-organized and independent citizens’ groups, associations, or organizations; non-profit entities;
- participation: access for individuals who are not professional media makers to get involved in media production and organization, thus breaking the boundaries between active producers and passive consumers;
- democratic structures: transparent and open decision-making; governing bodies are representative of the community they serve; collective decision-making is often favored over hierarchical structures;
- volunteer-driven: skill-sharing, individual and collective empowerment, and capacity-building play a central role in the mission and purpose; training is seen as key to both sustainability and personal development of volunteers;
- “alternative” content: community media give voice to groups, ideas, and cultures not always represented in mainstream media; they facilitate community-level debate and information sharing, and support the participation of marginalized communities in political, social, and cultural processes (Coyer & Hintz, 2010).

As citizen initiatives without large-scale institutional support, they face serious challenges with regards to financial sustainability, access to communication infrastructure such as spectrum allocation, positioning in the transition to digital broadcasting, and national legal frameworks. However, community media advocates argue that we cannot expect our digital futures to automatically offer access to media forms that are not adequately given space in

the analog present (Tridish and Coyer, 2005). Thus, space must still be created and fought for on analog platforms, such as FM radio, to ensure that community media are part of the digital transition. Experiences in the United States have shown that the transition to digital radio will not bring opportunities for new entrants to the market.

7.4 Chapter concluding remarks

This chapter focused on the issue of participation and empowerment. Alternative media contribution to countering marginalization and empowerment of Roma communities in Albania is directly linked to the embedded participatory media production processes, which enables Roma communities to put their communication rights in practice. Alternative media contribution to countering marginalization and empowerment of Roma communities in Albania is directly linked to the challenging of the concentration of symbolic power by giving voice to the Roma communities and enabling them to create their own meanings based on their own terms, not those of the majority. The democratic and participatory potential of alternative media to empower Roma communities in Albania is though limited by contextual media settings (digital divide, fragmented media market, financial sustainability, content and journalistic practices) and thus unable to fully challenge the existing dominant discourses.

CHAPTER VIII – STRATEGIES FOR ALTERNATIVE MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN ALBANIA

8.1 Challenges to the development of alternative media: Strategies for Sustainability

The alternative media platforms analyzed in this research, similar to alternative media worldwide, face major challenges with the biggest one being that of sustainability. First, these alternative media operate at the very margins of economic viability. It is one of the characteristics of the sector that it is able to reach and engage people and communities who face disadvantage and marginalization. It does so through social and economic models of operation and sustainability that would often not be viable on a commercial basis alone. Where commercial media generate revenue by targeting audiences with spending power, alternative and community media often build an audience around those who do not have spending power. This is precisely because the Roma communities are excluded from mainstream media and most in need of alternative access to voice and information. Second, they operate based on donors' funding and thus have not yet achieved any means of financial sustainability. As one of the media activists put it: *“applying for further funding is a major priority, otherwise we will not be able to do any programming”*.

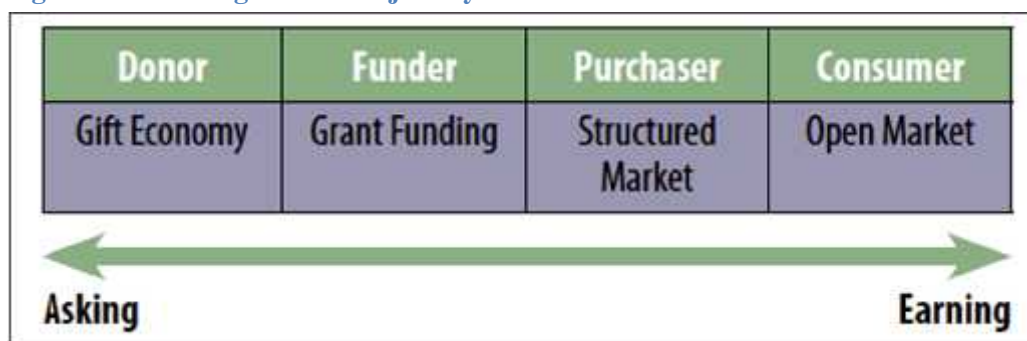
What is more, alternative media platforms analyzed here cannot rely on membership fees or donations from the Roma communities, due to their economic hardship, but also lack of alliances of all Roma associations and NGOs. Another media activist says: *“It is not like we can ask for membership fees, our community members are poor and they do not actually care to pay for our radio”*. Third, the alternative media platforms analyzed here are trying to move towards a form of social enterprise, i.e. seeking to secure minimal income and thus do not depend entirely on donors' funds. They seek to build an economic model of sustainability in order to achieve success in the pursuit of their social objectives. At the same, just like any enterprise, they have to make financial ends meet, by engaging in economic activity that can generate revenue at least sufficient to cover their operational costs. The question of engaging or not in economic activity is crucial as it relates to the core principles of alternative media.

Drawing from good practice on alternative and community media (Buckley, 2011; Coyer, 2010) the models of economic sustainability are as diverse as the alternative media sector itself. However, there are some characteristics that are commonly found in the most durable organizations. These include strategies for raising support from within the communities themselves – donations, membership schemes, payment for broadcast announcements, charges for the provision of services etc.; they include a preparedness to seek out and mobilize support from other sources such as public development agencies and non governmental organizations, by offering a platform for social communication and popular engagement; and they include an ability to control costs and to operate on very low

margins (Buckley, 2011; Coyer, 2010). In the case of alternative media in Albania, considering its early stage of development, the current model is based on donors' funding and volunteering. As a Roma youth working at Radio Kanxura puts it: *"we donate freely of our time even though we do not get paid and we do it because it is rewarding and it can help our less advantaged community members"*. The major challenge of alternative media platforms of Roma communities in Albania is that of financial sustainability, which becomes even more pressing when considering the lack of policy and regulatory framework on alternative media, i.e. no public funding is available.

Analysis of good practice of the development of alternative media so far shows that the three-legged funding model is the most appropriate one (Buckley, 2001; Buckley, et.al., 2007; Coyer, 2007). Fig. 18 demonstrates the trajectory from asking to earning in relation to alternative media funding models.

Figure 18: Funding Model Trajectory for Alternative Media



In many places, alternative and community media use a 'three-legged' model for funding. In this model, income generation is spread across three sources: communities, funders (including non-governmental and government funding programs) and advertisers from the private sector. For the three-legged model to work, each of the three funding sources must receive something of value in return: for instance, communities benefit from participation and from content; secondly, businesses, through advertising, get exposure for their products and services; third, funders and government want success in their funding efforts, i.e. the investment must pay off in terms of social or development impact or dissemination of education and information content, for example, health or voter education; promoting safe sex and human rights; discouraging violence against women or racial discrimination. As argued by one of the media activists: *"the struggle for us is to maintain our independence, core values and our ideal programming while at the same time serving the interests of the donors...this is not easy to do, I tell you..."*. Reconciling the alternative media mission and programming (medium, content, production and distribution) with the donor's interest and/or agenda is a major source of tension and internal struggle within the alternative media setting that might hinder sustainability if not handled correctly.

As Dagron (2004) and others have pointed out, however, sustainability extends

beyond simple economic considerations to include questions of social and institutional sustainability. In addition, alternative and community media need to consider the challenges of assuring technical and environmental sustainability. Social sustainability refers to relations between a media organization and the communities or audiences it serves. Many community media organizations have sprung from broader social movements and continue to be sustained by their tangible and intangible support. Radio Kanxura and other alternative media platforms analyzed in this research are deeply rooted within the civil society sector and are part of Roma non-governmental organizations and also work closely with non-Roma civil society actors.

However, social sustainability in terms of sustainable relations with the communities they serve is an intrinsic challenge because of the heterogeneity of the Roma communities, their diversity and even tensions and struggles within the communities. As shown by the UN Needs Assessment of Roma in Albania in 2012, Roma lack social capital in the sense of strategic cooperation and associations. As one of the interviewees argues: *“there are many Roma associations and we register in different ones, but we rarely really engage with them and there is always some kind of competition or rivalry between different organizations”*. The Roma are rich in cognitive social capital but not equally so in structural social capital. This form of capital is essential to help Roma express their needs and protect their interests, as well as to promote their participation in the political processes at the local, regional and national level. Structural social capital involves associations and networks that facilitate collective action. The two key elements of cognitive social capital are trust and solidarity.

Many associations are fragmented and local in character, or they are group or clan-based, along the lines of various Roma clans. Their human capacities and financial resources are limited. In the recent years, some Roma associations have started to collaborate with each other and launched joint initiatives. Although they have a lot of things in common, Roma associations still do not collaborate enough with each other. However, about 48% of Roma say that they have “no trust” in their associations (UNDP, 2012). According to the interviews, many Roma think that the associations do not uphold or protect the interests of the Roma communities effectively. These alternative media platforms have been developed by a group of Roma youth and Roma activists and operate based on open, inclusive and participatory approach. However, there are different groups within the Roma that do not identify with the values enacted by these alternative media and the adherence to the code of defilement is a major dividing line. Therefore, support and legitimation from various Roma communities still needs to be achieved. As pointed out by one of the media activist: *“there is still a long way towards building strategic associations within Roma NGOs despite our diversity”*.

Another dimension of sustainability is that of institutional sustainability, which refers to the structural arrangements for operational management and governance including accountability to the communities. For alternative and community media, engagement of

the community in management as well as in content making is important, contributing to a broader sense of community ownership and involvement. The participatory dimension here is key and is the defining element of alternative media. However, the participatory approach to the management of these alternative media comes with its own drawbacks. Decision-making processes, as seen above, are open and participatory, but the pressure to produce content and programming requires fast decisions taken by one individual, thus hindering the democratic potential of participatory decision-making. In addition, as one of the media activists argues: *“competences are required for us for the management of the radio, even on how to manage ourselves and how to organize our work, which we did not have before and need to learn now”*. In addition, financial management and logistics are also important and participants at Kanxura Radio argue that: *“we use the experience of IRCA as an NGO to deal with this issues and we have received some trainings so now we can train the newcomers”*. This points to the non-professional aspect of alternative media and peer-to-peer competence development. Managing community participation requires skills that fall outside of the traditional realm of media management or journalism, somewhere between community activism, community organization and even social work. Alternative and community media thrive on volunteer and other forms of community support.

Another dimension is that of technical sustainability, which requires technical support and know-how together with the selection of appropriate technologies that are robust, have low operating costs, are easy to maintain and are replaceable, if necessary. Alternative media that lack reliable technical systems risk losing their audiences, staff and supporters. With the pace of development of communication technologies, technical sustainability also requires the ability to appropriate new tools and applications such as mobile and the Internet. Participants at Kanxura Radio argue that: *“because we could not go for radio licensing and equipment was to expensive, we are now broadcasting online, but there still a lot to be learned on how to use the right techniques and we cannot rely on experts, we need to find out ourselves”*. Again this points to the necessity to support with training and funding these efforts to establish and further develop alternative media. The issue of environmental sustainability seems remote for alternative media of Roma communities in Albania due to more emergent issues of survival.

This analysis of the sustainability challenges of the Roma alternative media platforms in Albania points to the argument that sustainability is not a simple goal for alternative media to be achieved. Sustainability can be defined as set of activities that enable alternative media to mobilize the right kinds of resources to meet communities' needs as they emerge, and to manage them efficiently over time in a contingent environment. As Coyer (2007) points out *“sustainability is about mission, ideology and quality – the resources mobilized must be able to sustain community media’s core features of independence, participation and quality service. This means mobilizing the right kinds of resources”*. The underlying concepts here are: first, the meaning of sustainability will

change as communities' needs change; second, sustainability cannot be understood or measured in simple financial terms – it is about all kinds of resources: ability, energy, capacity, efficiency, flexibility and planning. It is about capacity, activities and change. Third, to the extent that sustainability can be seen as an organizational target or goal, it must be seen as one that changes in relation to other changing organizational targets or goals. The core issues of independence, community participation and quality community service make sustainability a tricky issue for alternative media. Sustainability is not just about mobilizing resources and managing them efficiently. It is about mobilizing the right kinds of resources at the right time, to fit changing needs and contexts, and managing them efficiently. It is about institution, community and finance. As put by one of the participants at Kanxura Radio: *"We do not wish to make profit, but if we do not survive then what is the purpose of it all"*. The capacity to forge and maintain partnerships is vitally important to sustainability.

Apart from sustainability, another set of risks relate to participation and how the media processes function. The first limitation of participatory media is fragmentation and risk of self-isolation. Small-scale participatory media often remain marginal, which brings about the danger of a fragmentation (Sandoval & Fuchs, 2010). Participatory, non-commercial media that reject professional organization processes often suffer from a lack of resources, which makes it difficult to gain public visibility and to establish a broad counter-public sphere. But public visibility is necessary for raising awareness regarding the repressive character of capitalism and for supporting radical social transformations. The public marginality of many alternative media projects stems from a lack of professional organization structures. The disadvantages of collective organization structures would be high expenditures of time and resources. Alternative media would therefore remain in an 'alternative niche'. To avoid this, alternative media should recognize that skills as marketing and promotion can be used to further their political goals.

In this context Knoche (2003) argues that alternative media (like free radios) aim at being independent from state, markets, and capital, but are confronted with the antagonism between dominative structures and emancipatory goals. The lack of funds, interested audiences, and participants, and the grounding in self-exploited precarious labour frequently results in pressures for commercialization, and marginalization or abandonment of radical content in order to reach broader audiences as well as the permanent threat of remaining insignificant non-profit-dogs (Knoche, 2003, p. 10). For the realm of alternative media this means that self-sufficient alternative media projects that do not engage in wider political projects will become individualistic spaces of withdrawal, whereas networks of alternative media that develop political visions and practices and act together to form a larger political counter-public sphere have the potential to support larger-scale political change processes. This creates problems for continuous production and for reaching a broad audience. Gaining public visibility requires financial resources for producing and distributing media products. Under capitalism it is difficult to obtain these resources

without making use of commercial mechanisms of financing like selling space for advertisements.

The second limitation of participatory media: participation can be used as a means of profit accumulation or for advancing repressive political purposes. Participatory production processes need not necessarily be emancipatory, but can also be used for advancing repressive or racist and discriminatory (ex. hate speech). The research shows that the inspiring developments of alternative media in Albania such as the case of Kanxura Radio of the Roma communities are practices of alternative media as participatory communicative spaces. All this requires an enabling environment for alternative media, not merely from a purely regulatory perspective, but also at the social, political, and cultural levels, in allowing resistance and the voicing of dissent in the social and political realms. It is thus important to reinforce the relevance of acknowledging the diversity of alternative media in the study (and elaboration) of media and communication policies, as well as their role in politics, in everyday life, and in strengthening democracy. This research, based on findings and literature, argues for two sets of strategies to provide an enabling environment and thereby strengthen the presence of alternative media in society, and ultimately of participation and democracy.

The first set is aimed at strengthening the niches that alternative media occupy, often caught in the uneasy position between market and state. The second focuses more on the societal context in which alternative media operate: by enlarging the network (or rhizome), alternative media can be part of a broader movement and their democratic function within civil society can be exposed to a higher degree. For example on policy level, set up of media funds, specifically oriented towards direct financing of projects, privileging alternative media. Very different kinds of participatory media projects could receive support, thereby strengthening the alternative media spaces in print, over the airwaves, on television, and on the Internet. Such funds could be cross subsidized by a small percentage of the advertising revenues of the public and/or commercial media. A second point related to strengthening of the niches in which alternative media operate, is the need for high-quality legislation and regulation and their enforcement embedded within local political, social, and cultural contexts. This legislation should not be limited to the protection of human rights (in its widest sense), but needs to recognize the specificities and differences of alternative media on the technical, organizational, and content-related levels, at the same time allowing for the establishment of strategic alliances with public mainstream media. In this regard, the agenda of communication rights is highly relevant (Cammaerts and Carpentier, 2007).

At the same time, policies should be oriented towards the important role of alternative media in deepening the levels of democratization and in promoting a vibrant civic culture (Dahlgren 2000), thereby aiming to enlarge the network or rhizome. This democratic function relates to their role as a nodal point in the network of civil society. The first step towards improving the strength of the rhizome is improving the network between

the different alternative media themselves, an aim that could be realized through the structural (financial) support for the representative national and international organizations of the alternative media. Furthermore, the number of connections between alternative media and non-media civil organizations should be increased. Project funding specifically aimed at stimulating voluntary collaboration between media and non-media organizations should be prioritized. Finally, the importance of connections between public (and other) mainstream media and alternative media should be stressed.

The rhizomatic approach allows the rigid separations created by the antagonistic position towards mainstream media and towards the market and the state, to be breached. Moreover, it enables collaboration with public mainstream media, which would be beneficial for both parties if carried out with the utmost respect for the individual identities of the actors involved. The establishment of partnerships between public broadcasters and alternative media firstly would strengthen alternative media, which are sometimes in very vulnerable positions, and allow them to broaden their public sphericules. Such partnerships would also enable public broadcasters to extend beyond their existing limits and innovate, in response to the challenges from digital media. The achievements and limitations of alternative media in facilitating and realizing access, participation, self-representation, self-management, community cohesion, civil empowerment, societal and discursive diversity, pluralism, and democracy should be considered a knowledge reservoir that can and should be accessed by public broadcasters and should be mobilized in the face of a radical pluralistic democracy.

8.2 Enabling environment for alternative media: Policy and values

Despite the growing recognition of the role of alternative and community media across the world, there still remains a need to promote and defend the right of communities to own and to operate their own media. This is so particularly in countries in South-Eastern Europe with a limited legacy and practice of alternative media that could serve diverse communities. In this context, including Albania, the policy, legal and regulatory framework, remains the single most persistent obstacle to establishment and development of alternative media for social change. However, studies (Buckley, 2011; Dagron, 2004) have demonstrated that there is worldwide experience of legislating and regulating community media that could serve as basis for good practice. The UNESCO has also developed a guideline of good practice on community media as well as the European Commission and Council of Europe, which demonstrate for an increased attention towards alternative media. They refer to as community media. The current law on media in Albania, adopted in 2013 as analyzed above, does not make specific provisions for alternative or community media for marginalized communities. The alternative or community media are not recognized at all as a separate media sector in addition to the public and commercial

media. In the case of Albania, the findings show that there is still much to be done to establish policies, laws and regulations that enable and encourage alternative media to start-up and to flourish as tools of empowerment of marginalized communities towards social change and celebration of difference.

The enabling environment for alternative media needs also to be considered in the wider political context as was outlined in the media and political system in the above section. First, for alternative media to be developed the basic human rights, including freedom of expression and association, need to be guaranteed. The struggle towards democratization, the polarized and antagonistic political system, the high level of corruption and clientelism as well as challenges in the strengthening of the rule of law in Albania hinder the establishment and development of alternative media for social inclusion. Second, conditions that favour alternative media are most likely to be achieved in a context of deepening democratic processes and the adoption of a public interest approach to the development of free, independent and pluralistic media (Buckley et al. 2008). As analyzed above, the recent media policy reform in Albania was not motivated by the public interest, but rather by clientelistic and private interest in the symbiotic relationship between media, politics and business.

The overall media policy approach in Albania has been a combination of the mimetic and atavistic orientations, highly dependent on the degree of democratization in the country and the Albanian political culture. In terms of media and politics relations, elites in Albania have proclaimed the guarantee for media freedom, but in practice they have retained mechanisms to control the media, thus hindering the independence of the PSB. The discussion on the transformation of rtsh into PSM requires not only a focus on audiences, but also the necessity to make the public dimension more transparent and explicit as well as the service dimension more efficient while still adhering to the public service remit and its democratic functions in society. Third, an active role of civil society, academics, practitioners, media professionals and activists as well as communities members is required to pressure the government, media governing bodies and other stakeholders to acknowledge alternative or community media as a third legitimate media sector in its own right in addition to the public and commercial media.

Drawing from the current context in Albania, alternative media have started to be established despite the policy and legal framework in place. As one of the participants in the research working with Radio Kanxura puts it: *“We needed a tool to communicate, we hade the idea, we tried to get the means to implement it, even though there is no law in paper about our effort to develop an alternative medium of communication”*. Experience with alternative and community media in other countries, particularly drawing from the tradition of communication for development, point to the necessity to have in place three basic elements: recognition, access and support (Buckley, 2011). In the case of Albania, an explicit and clear recognition of alternative and community media as a distinct third media sector needs to be achieved. As pointed out by one of the interviewed media professionals:

“The alternative media sector need to be recognized and thus be able to break the existing dual media system comprised of public and commercial media and thus offer spaces to other forms of media organization and media content not only for marginalized groups...also for other interest groups, also including art, literature, opposition etc.”. Considering that various forms of alternative media have started to operate in Albania, it is thus time for academics, practitioners, media professionals and governmental organizations to recognize their existence and work toward an enabling environment.

The second step is that of access, which implies a legal and regulatory framework that provides straightforward and transparent processes for access to the radio and broadcasting spectrum and distribution platforms necessary for community media to operate. This is an urgent matter in the case of Albania as it is currently implementing the digitalization process. The interviews with media activists and professionals point to the same issue, i.e. the lack of public debate on the impact of the digitalization process on the small and local media and therefore on alternative media formats. *“The digitalization process has been discussed in mainstream media only in terms of the political deadlocks and the alleged corrupted tender procedures, thus offering no space for explaining the outcomes of the process to the citizens or engaging with the impacted groups such as the most vulnerable and marginalized”.* The Government of Albania adopted the National Strategy on the Transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting and its Action Plan in May 2012 with the core aim to implement the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting. The regulatory authority, policy makers and legislators in Albania have not only lagged behind the actual media developments in the country, particularly in the case of the digital broadcasting, but also hindered the process itself.

The public service broadcaster rtsh was assigned the role of engine in the digitalization process. rtsh is the leading actor in the digital switchover as the Strategy outlines that *“the public broadcaster – rtsh - creates, exploits and operates national digital network based of the contract stipulated with AMA”.* With the digital switchover, the remit of rtsh is reaffirmed as to offer free to air informative, didactic and entertainment programs to the users spread over the country despite their geographic position. Therefore *rtsh* will offer public and free programmes as well as conditional access programmes. In addition, the existing local broadcaster will be transferred to the rtsh digital networks and will pay a differentiated fee to rtsh for this service based on the ‘digital islands’ approach. The regulatory and PSB are supposed to cooperate together as part of the digital switch over plan in these main areas: (i) determining the criteria and number of programmes of public nature and free-to-air, and those with conditional access; (ii) establishing the criteria and contracts that *rtsh* and existing local operators will sign for using the network of the public operator; (iii) the issue of fees the operators must pay to *rtsh* for using this network should be discussed and agreed; (iv) the regulation on criteria and regulatory measures for the common use of *rtsh*’s broadcasting infrastructure should be revised.³⁰ After the transition

³⁰ National Strategy on the Transition from Analogue to Digital Broadcasting, Council of Ministers, 2012.

period, digital network license is given by an open competition warranting an equal, objective and non-discriminatory treatment.

The media authority (AMA) with its own initiative or with the request of interested subjects, open the competition process, taking into consideration the frequency plan and the availability of the free frequencies for digital broadcasting. However, if the independence and accountability of the regulatory body are still in question after the transition as it is today, then the process is undermined. The digital switchover process encompasses the issues of access and affordability, which are addresses in the Strategy, but the implementation is far from appropriate. The Strategy provides for a public information campaign that includes the following plans: (i) a call-center shall be established. Funds shall be secured, the staff shall be trained and manuals shall be ready for the staff to use; (ii) public information campaign in the media and an informative brochure; (iii) organization of conferences to raise awareness of digital switchover.

There has been almost no discussion in the media regarding digital switchover. Discussions and hearing sessions in Parliament have been reported mainly by the media from the same group as the existing platforms, in accordance with the tone or interest that each company has on digital switchover.³¹ However, there has been no in-depth program or discussion organized beyond brief and biased news reporting. This discussion has been seen as more of an internal development within the media companies or the public broadcaster, rather than a process that will affect every citizen. The digital switchover has not even been discussed in the academic sphere. In conclusion, the digital switch over process has to be considered within the specific media context in Albania, i.e. a symbiotic and intertwined relation between business, politics and media that has affected the process negatively. Despite the expressed political consensus for the digital switchover it has become a delicate and contested issue in Albania.

The digitalization process is crucial in the establishment and development of alternative media in Albania as it relates to the allocation of spectrum and other resources, which should be responsive to demand from community-based organizations. These policy decisions need to meet the essential characteristics of alternative media for social change and inclusion; there should be no unnecessary obstacles that would exclude or deter communities from providing community media services; and the process should be managed by a body that is independent of political interference (Buckley et.al., 2008; Buckley, 2011). This then leads to the third step of support, i.e. a policy and legal framework that has regard to sustainability and resourcing of alternative media for various communities by providing funding, capacity development and other support. One way of supporting alternative media in terms of policy is to provide spectrum access or license fees for free or a nominal charge so as not exclude communities with few resources such as the case of Roma communities or other marginalized communities. As argued by one of the interviewees: *“Of course, support from the government is only one part of our journey. We*

³¹ For example the coverage of Top Media vs. Tring TV, having opposite interests in the process.

also seek funding from other sources, particularly from donors and also from our members, but this is hard due to their poor economic conditions". Therefore the management and organizational model of alternative media, for profit or not for profit, remains a key challenge towards sustainability and it will be analyzed below.

The above mentioned three steps of recognition, access and support towards the establishment of an enabling policy environment for alternative media point primarily to the role of the state or government and public institutions. However, an enabling environment that supports and encourages alternative media to establish and to develop has two other vital ingredients (Buckley, 2011; Coyer & Hintz, 2010). The first of these is the existence of civil society based advocacy groups and representative associations that promote alternative media development; that lobby for improvements in policies, laws, regulations and the distribution of resources; and that provide services and support to assist the alternative and community media sector to build sustainability and social impact. This research showed that the establishment of alternative media for the Roma communities comes within the framework of Roma NGOs and other associations. As the Founder of Kanxura Radio highlights: *"Kanxura Radio is anchored at the Institute of Romani Culture in Albania, which is a Roma non-governmental organizations and was initially supported with funds and capacity development by UET Centre, also a non-governmental organizations working on issues related to human rights and social inclusion"*. Media professionals, media experts and activists participating in the study in general in Albania have underlined the public interest in media development as a crucial necessity towards the strengthening of a pluralistic and professional media landscape. This public interest needs to be broadened to include the promotion of alternative media as a third sector of media system in Albania that contributes towards social change and inclusion of various marginalized communities. As highlighted by one of the interviewees: *"If no one talks about the communication needs and rights of marginalized communities, it is like they do not exist. We cannot go as far as big media like Top Channel or Klan, but we can do our own media and the access to Internet and a simple computer and smartphone can help us. But we need much more than this, this is like the entry point"*. Therefore, the second element is that of the support from various public and private stakeholders for the development of alternative media and thus nourishing public debate in the mainstream on these issues.

Drawing from the theoretical framework on alternative media, good practice on community media and the interviews with the Roma communities, media professionals, experts and activists, a set of key characteristics for policy model towards an enabling environment for alternative media to develop is proposed. This model considers the role and responsibilities of the four dimensions of the Quadruple Helix: (i) governmental institutions; (ii) private sector, i.e. business and industry; (iii) academic and research institutions; (iv) civil society and media.

Table 26: Policy Model for Alternative Media in Albania

Sector	Role and suggested actions
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide a vision for the development of alternative media as a crucial part of a healthy, pluralistic and diverse media landscape catering for various interests, perspectives, voices; ➤ Recognition of alternative or community media as a third sector in addition to the dual system of public and private/commercial media; ➤ Development of adequate policies to support with funding and other mechanisms alternative media for social change and inclusion thus contributing to an open and diverse society that celebrates differences; ➤ Professional and independent public body to support and fund alternative media; ➤ Planning and reserving digital spectrum for small, local and alternative media; ➤ Open and transparent process for frequency allocation; ➤ A community-oriented content provider or a content sharing network to provide content that community media may not themselves have resources to create.
Private sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ As part of corporate social responsibility, provides free and open source software and funding for alternative media;
Academia and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alliance of media professionals, media scholars and media activists to support alternative media; ➤ Support alternative media platforms with capacity-building, competences and skills for media production and development; ➤ A national forum to advocate for community media; to co-ordinate and support provision; to market community media, and to set standards; ➤ Applicable research on sustainability of alternative media and development models;
Civil society and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Public interest in media development and landscape; ➤ Advocacy for media policy and legal reform; ➤ Delivering projects and services focused on alternative media for social change and inclusion; ➤ Mainstreaming the relevance of alternative media as a third sector in addition to the dual system of public and private/commercial media; ➤ Holding powerful elites, being government, private or media, accountable through mechanisms of monitoring, transparency, organized actions and advocacy; ➤ Alliance of media professionals, media scholars and media activists to support alternative media; ➤ Association of alternative media (print, radios, online, broadcasting) and production groups to lobby for their interests; ➤ Support for local and small alternative and other media organizations;

While there are many definitions of community and alternative media and different experiences across different contexts, the policy principles to be adhered to are the same. There is no one single regulatory definition of community broadcasting and more broadly alternative media. Policies focus on definitions emphasizing broadcasting that is not-for-profit, participatory, and made for and by a local audience (Coyer, 2007). It makes sense that there is no “one size fits all” approach. The specific shape and feel of each national system will differ to because it reflects local conditions and cultures. However, characteristics that should be a part of any legal definition of community and alternative media, including the case of Albania as analyze here, are:

- independence from government and commercial entities;
- servicing either geographic communities or communities of interest;
- ownership and management by the people of the community; and
- operating for social gain not private financial profit.

The findings suggest that examples of the kinds of state financing that can be provided for alternative media in Albania include:

- An alternative media or more specifically a community radio fund supported through taxes;
- A levy on cable concessions;
- A percentage of license fees from commercial stations;
- A percentage of commercial broadcaster’s advertising revenue;
- A proportion of the general license fee for public service broadcasting;
- Indirect public funding in the form of schemes not directly targeting community media such as employment support, social inclusion programs or neighborhood regeneration schemes;
- Support from regional bodies and international organizations such as the European Union; and/or UNDP etc., which already provide funding for Roma communities, but do not address so far communication rights and alternative media.

In conclusion, the political will to create and protect alternative and community media and an enabling legal environment are fundamental to long-term sustainability. According to the World Association of Community Broadcasters (AMARC), the lack of proper enabling legislation is the biggest single barrier to community media’s social impact and sustainability. In addition to providing some access to funding and setting criteria for commercial revenue, states can also provide other incentives for community media and relieve some of the economic burden through other means, such as concessions on rates for public utilities like electricity and water, free or reduced internet and telephone connectivity, access to solar or wind power, tax-except status as non-profit organizations and exemptions from sales tax and import duties on equipment purchased abroad, access to low cost satellite and mobile phone services, access to training programs, employee benefits, etc (Coyer, 2007; Buckely, 2011).

Policies vary widely on this topic, but the most sustainable sectors are those with minimal interference from government with regards to content. Finally, the transition from analogue to digital broadcasting poses new challenges that need to be addressed. The growth of digital radio provides both new opportunities and new challenges for community communication. Opportunities in the digital transition include greater frequency availability - the so-called “digital dividend”. But without public service obligations in place, there are no guarantees that this new airspace will result in greater opportunities for alternative and community media. Debates about the future of media (be it digital or analogue) should include the needs and interests of local communities and small-scale, not-for-profit media for a truly pluralistic media environment to flourish.

8.3 Chapter Concluding Remarks

This chapter explored the challenges to the development of alternative media of, for and by marginalized communities in Albania in terms of media content production, technology, distribution and organization and secondly it explored the media policy settings and values needed in order to enable the democratic and participatory potential of alternative media towards social inclusion.

CHAPTER IX– CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Research Concluding Remarks: Merits and limits of alternative media

Though specific definitions of alternative media vary, the approach taken by this research is that alternative media as a concept generally refers to self-organized, participatory, not-for-profit media that address local geographic communities and/or communities of interest. The key characteristic of these alternative media is the embedded participatory processes in the medium, content, management and distribution. Alternative media or community media challenge traditional conceptions of a dual media system, suggesting instead a three-tier media landscape that includes public service, commercial, and alternative or community media (Coyer & Hintz, 2010). The analysis shows that in the case of Albania, alternative media of, by, for and about Roma communities are responding to several media-related as well as political challenges as highlighted in the theoretical framework:

- i. *Media pluralism.* Alternative media are one of many responses to concerns over increasing concentration of media ownership, economic and political control over vital communication resources and infrastructures, and the need for diversity of content and opinions in the media (Coyer & Hintz, 2010; Carpentier, 2011; Bailey, Cammaerts, Carpentier, 2008). Commercialization and lingering state influence and control have also placed pressures on public service broadcasting. The symbiotic interrelations between media, politics and business in Albania can be challenged, amongst other things, by the development of alternative media platforms such as the case with the Roma communities' media. Complementing public and commercial media systems, these alternative media have the potential to create spaces to broaden public debate, inject local and different voices that are often neglected in an increasingly commercialized, personalized and globalized media landscape, and offer an alternative to what is often criticized as homogenized, commercial culture. By ensuring that media production does not remain solely in the hands of large scale institutions, alternative media remind us that media pluralism is not just about plurality of content but plurality of content producers and of owners.
- ii. *Counter-hegemonic discourses.* Alternative media offer participatory communication spaces to marginalised communities that do not usually have access to mainstream media and thus challenge dominant discourse of power relations in society. In the case of Albania, Roma alternative media focus primarily on education, intercultural dialogue and serving the communities and to a limited extent they engage with countering dominant discourses.
- iii. *Active citizenship.* A decline in trust, confidence, and participation in the political system has led to concerns over the necessary renewal of democracy and citizenship in Europe, but also in Albania as various studies demonstrate on the erosion of trust in political system (Bino, 2016, Kajsiu, 2010). In this light, alternative and

community media have a long history of activating citizens and facilitating participation. The Roma alternative media in Albania have managed successfully to enact active citizenship by engaging Roma youth and activists and facilitating and promoting participation in decision-making processes. The founding principles of these alternative media are based on openness and participation, as well as the direct involvement of marginalized Roma communities. As such these alternative media organizations are spaces where the very issues and principles that compose a democratic society are being played out, explored, and experienced.

- iv. *Participation in and through the media.* Roma alternative media in Albania are an example of participatory media as an exemplary site of participation, advocacy and activism, as well as creative and innovative uses of media for social inclusion and celebration of differences. Alternative media thus offer opportunities for participation in the media (content production, management and distribution) as well participation through the media in the decision-making processes to advocate and promote Roma communities' rights and social inclusion. Participation in decision-making is widely understood in political communication theory as fundamental to the democratic process (Carpentier, 2011). This conceptualization of participation aligns with Carpentier's (2011a) definition of full or 'maximalist' participation as an influence in decision-making. In contrast, the political approach produces a much more restrictive definition of participation, which refers to the equalisation of power inequalities in particular decision-making processes (see Carpentier 2011; Carpentier, Dahlgren, and Pasquali 2014). Participation then becomes defined as the equalization of power relations between privileged and non-privileged actors in formal or informal decision-making processes.
- v. *Media policy advocacy.* Alternative media advocates are emerging as significant actors in media reform movements and efforts to orient policy environments towards more democratic normative and legal frameworks. Networks of cooperation are increasing, designed to facilitate cross-border linkages between community media projects. Activists and civil-society organizers are partnering with academics and sympathetic policymakers with the aim of intervening in policy processes. This is still in initial phase in the case of Albania. However, so far Roma alternative media have already worked towards the enhancement of networking and advocacy for the entire Roma communities and social change. By promoting participation, social change and inclusion these media produce alternative discourses on social development.
- vi. *Social value and contribution.* The "social gain" value that is derived from alternative media activity and identified in a number of empirical studies (Howley, 2005; Jankowski and Prehn, 2002; Rennie, 2006; Bailey, Cammaerts, and Carpentier, 2007; and Coyer, Dowmunt, and Fountain, 2007). In the case of Albania the social value of Roma alternative media includes social cohesion, the

strengthening of community identities and inter-community exchange, media pluralism and media literacy, provision of crucial information such as on health and the environment, promotion of local cultures, and cross-cultural dialogue. These alternative media offer platforms for civic engagement and most importantly participation for citizens to play an active role in community life, as they act as a catalyst for a diversity of activists, artists, and civil society organizations. They have been called a “significant component of participatory democracy” (European Parliament, directorate General internal Policies of the union, 2007, p. 5 as quoted in Coyer and Hintz, 2010).

The present research has repeatedly emphasized that the alternative media - as a major constituent in the dissemination of the views and opinion formation of 'subaltern counterpublics' (Fraser, 1992) have the potential to offer even more than 'interpretation'; they provide communities with access to other readers' (activists') lived experiences and on occasion offers these as part of a network of sociocultural and sociopolitical projects, i.e. often aimed at social change through extra-parliamentary means. The alternative media have provided empowering narratives of resistance for those counter-publics, i.e. Roma communities that are written by those very counter-publics, i.e. the participatory processes in media production, management and distribution. A key feature of these media is the erosion of the expert who is dependent on formal education and professionalization, to be replaced by the autodidact, informally skilled often through collective experimentation and peer-to-peer support.

The ability to express and publish opinions in the alternative media is radically different from the situation in the mass media. Whereas access to the mass media by readers is severely limited, in the main being through letters to the editor (the majority remaining unpublished, thus further limiting access), the alternative media claim a democratic, participatory ethos, where readers are very often able to contribute articles and take part in editorial decision-making, even becoming editors themselves. Access to the alternative media encourages self-publishing, whereby readers may publish their own papers and magazines quite independently from one another (most often as zines), with minimal financial outlay.

The alternative media in their public sphere not only involve people directly in their production and distribution, but they do so with far less commodification than do the mass media. The desires and demands of agents are articulated through alternative media by a set of transgressive practices that challenge dominant forms of organization and cultural and political practice, and that establish their own alternative frames of participation, power and creative action. Participants do not simply consume reflexively, but produce reflexively in an attempt to '*change the way in which we construct our selves, our actions and our life worlds*'. The Roma communities are marginalized and disempowered by their treatment in the mass media, treatment against which they generally have no redress, and thus alternative media are an alternative to the mainstream media and failure of public service

media.

Alternative media play a vital role at the level of local communities, offering their members' access to an (alternative) media system and providing them (as publics) with wide sets of alternative discourses and representations that are often missing in the mainstream media. As members of the local civil society they – and many other civil society organizations – are key societal actors, vital to the further democratization of the social and political. As localized media they often act as catalysts for a social struggles, thus occupying an important position within the local rhizomes. At the same time they continue to face a variety of threats, which force them into a constant struggle for survival and reduce their potential strength and societal impact. Being small-scale media renders them relatively harmless, and incapable of being the 'thorns in the side of political power', to use Keane's (1991: 150) words.

In conclusion, the main merit of alternative media is that of participation and empowerment. Alternative media contribution to countering marginalisation and empowerment of Roma communities in Albania is directly linked to the challenging of the concentration of symbolic power by giving voice to the Roma communities and enabling them to create their own meanings based on their own terms, not those of the majority. The democratic and participatory potential of alternative media to empower Roma communities in Albania is though limited by contextual media settings (digital divide, fragmented media market, financial sustainability, content and journalistic practices) and thus unable to fully challenge the existing dominant discourses.

9.2 Reflection on research design and suggestion for future research

This research adopted a qualitative research design by looking in depth into a particular case study and exploring alternative media in the case of Albania. Future research is needed in order to explore the impact of alternative media by employing both qualitative and quantitative design. Also future research is needed regarding the online participatory spaces. Voice is undoubtedly a crucial capacity but a voice that is not heard or recognized cannot fully achieve the promise of democratic participation (Couldry, 2010; Dobson, 2014). Coleman (in Dobson, 2014) says failure to listen is a powerful means of closing down voices. Couldry (2010) says that while contemporary democracies offer proliferating opportunities for voice, there is little attention paid to the necessity of that voice being heard. This can result in a 'recognition crisis' when *'a system that provides formal voice for its citizens but fails so markedly to listen exhibits a crisis of political voice'* (Couldry, 2010: 101). Future research should focus on the questions of who is listening to alternative media and to what extent can alternative media empower marginalized communities if the mainstream is not listening. Another possible area of research is how digital and social media might enable more effective ways of connecting Roma marginalized voices to institutional democracy. The challenge lies in the fact that Roma communities have more

media access than ever, but there is a danger of creating echo chambers if decision-makers do not hear them (Dreher, 2009). Research on the mainstream media's ability to engage with marginalized communities' media should also be carried out. Participatory media forms offer more hope, and the concept of listening provides ways of seeing whether new media forms can enable improved participation in mainstream public spheres where decisions are made.

9.3 Recommendations

Despite of the constraints of alternative media, it is considered as a basic democratic procedure to empower marginalised communities, encourage their self-management and the production of alternative formats and contents. Community radio as an alternative radio implies the involvement of people into programming, management and distribution. Therefore the potential of the community radio for the Roma in Albania as in other cases of alternative media lies in the external and internal pluralism. External pluralism refers to the provision of different voices and perspectives as opposed to the public or private media organisations. Internal pluralism refers to being internally democratic, non-commercial and non-professional and not institutionalised, thus providing a platform for diversity of formats, content and styles.

Recommendations for the development of alternative media:

- it all starts from the assessment of needs of the community – fully understanding their context, their perspectives, their needs, their aims, their vision for their future;
- it cannot be done as another benevolent act of the majority to the minority – the communities need to be enabled to develop alternative communicative spaces themselves;
- education is key but also concrete training on certain competences and capacity development on media, projects, communication, writing skills etc.;
- working with the community activists and leaders and promoting the role models;
- working with diverse groups: Roma, Egyptian, Albanians and enable them to build networks (alliances) for the present and the future.

For alternative media to flourish, there should be an enabling environment and not just a policy on paper. The best practices include: recognition of community media as a formal “third sector” alongside commercial and public service media; criteria that ensures participatory, open and community driven media emerge; mixed models of funding that include some form of ongoing and renewable government subsidy; flexibility that allows for communities to self- identify and define their own area of service coverage as much as possible; recognition of the social gain and value community media can provide; and support for research, impact measurement and audience studies to improve community service. Finally, there must exist the political will on the part of policy makers to support sustainable community media, which should be a clear part of national media democracy strategies.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX I – Interview guidelines

Informacion për projektin kërkimor

Titulli: T'i kundërvihesh skajimit përmes ligjërimit: kufizimet e 'sferës publike' dhe mundësitë e mediave alternative: Radio e Komunitetit Rom'

Organizata implementuese: Blerjana Bino, Qendra UET

Qëllimi dhe përdorimi i të dhënave:

Qëllimi i projektit kërkimor është të analizojë se në çfarë mënyre format e ndryshme të mediave alternative ndikojnë në kundërvënien ndaj skajimit përmes prodhimit të ligjërimeve alternative përkundër atyre dominuese.

Të dhënat e mbledhura gjatë intervistës së thelluar janë konfidenciale dhe do të ruhet anonimat juaj. Ato të të përdoren vetëm për publikimin e raportit final të kërkimit.

INFORMACION PËR TË INTERVISTUARIN

Emri/Mbiemri:

E-mail:

(nevojitet për miratimin e zbardhjes së intervistës dhe dërgimin e raportit të studimit)

Mob_____ *(opsional)*

Institucioni:

Pozicioni:

[Intervistuesit: Blerjana Bino]

[Emri i te intervistuarit:]

Linjat e pyetjeve për OJQ-të

A mund të përmbledhni shkurt organizatën që përfaqësoni?

Cili është roli juaj në organizatë?

Si vepron organizata juaj në fushën e grupeve të skajuar?

A mund të jepni një tablo të situatës së komunitit Rom në Shqipëri sot?

Cilat janë sfidat kryesore që has ky komunitet?

Si mendoni se pasqyrohet ky komunitet në median masive në Shqipëri?

Si dhe sa janë të zhvilluara kapacitetet e këtij komuniteti sa i takon medias?

Si mund të prodhohej një media më pjesëmarrëse për këtë komunitet?

Si mund të ndërtohej një media alternative si radio?

Cilat janë problemet? Po mundësitë?

Linjat e pyetjeve për OJQ-të ndërkombëtare

A mund të përmbledhni shkurt organizatën që përfaqësoni? Prej sa kohe vepron në Shqipëri?

Cili është roli juaj në organizatë? Sa kohë keni ju në Shqipëri?

Si vepron organizata juaj në fushën e grupeve të skajuar?

Si bashkëpunon me komunitetin?

Si bashkëpunon me organizatat e tjera?

A mund të jepni një tablo të situatës së komunitit Rom në Shqipëri sot?

Sipas pikëvështrimit të organizatës suaj

Si mendoni se pasqyrohet ky komunitet në median masive në Shqipëri?

A hasni të njëjtat dukuri edhe në vende të tjera ku punon organizata?

Si dhe sa janë të zhvilluara kapacitetet e këtij komuniteti sa i takon medias?

Si mund të prodhohej një media më pjesëmarrëse për këtë komunitet?

Cili do ishte roli i qeverisë dhe i shoqërisë civile?

Linjat e pyetjeve për institucionet publike/qeveritare

A mund të përmbledhni shkurt institucionin që përfaqësoni?

Cili është roli juaj në institucion?

Si vepron institucioni juaj në fushën e grupeve të skajuar?

Si bashkëpunon me komunitetin?

Si bashkëpunon me organizatat e tjera lokale Rome dhe jo Rome?

Si bashkëpunon me organizatat ndërkombëtare?

Cilat janë programet dhe planet e veprimit për këtë komunitet?

A mund të shtjelloni lidhur me hartimin e strategjive të reja 2014-2020?

A është bërë një process konsultimi?

Si mendoni se pasqyrohet ky komunitet në median masive në Shqipëri?

A mendoni se ka një rol rregullues edhe për qeverinë në këtë drejtim?

Si dhe sa janë të zhvilluara kapacitetet e këtij komuniteti sa i takon medias?

Si mund të prodhohej një media më pjesëmarrëse për këtë komunitet?

Cili do ishte roli i qeverisë dhe i shoqërisë civile?

ANNEX II – Focus group guideline

Udhëzues për FOCUS Grup

KOMUNITETI ROM DHE KOMPETENCAT MEDIATIKE

Titulli i Projektit: ‘Fuqizimi i të rinjve Rom përmes zhvillimit të kapaciteteve dhe edukimit për median alternative’

Partnerë: IRCA, UET

Qëllimi dhe përdorimi i të dhënave:

Qëllimi i fazës së parë të projektit është të analizojë se në çfarë mënyre format e ndryshme të mediave alternative ndikojnë në kundërvënien ndaj skajimit përmes prodhimit të ligjëtimeve alternative përkundër atyre dominuese.

Të dhënat e mbledhura gjatë fokus grupit janë konfidenciale dhe do të ruhet anonimat juaj. Ato të të përdoren vetëm për publikimin e raportit final të kërkimit. Të dhënat që mblidhen janë të dhënat të dala nga grupi, dhe jo individuale.

Linjat e bashkë-bisedimit në fokus grupe

Prezantim i shkurtër i pjesëmarrësve

Prezantim i shkurtër i organizatës/sfondit profesional

Aktivizmi, përfshirja në fushën e grupeve të skajuar

Tablo esitues së komunitit Rom në Shqipëri sa i takon komunikimit, mediave.

Cilat janë sfidat kryesore që has ky komunitet sa i takon kompetencave mediatike.

Si mendoni se pasqyrohet ky komunitet në median massive (TV, radio, shtyp) në Shqipëri?

Si dhe sa janë të zhvilluara kapacitetet e këtij komuniteti sa i takon medias?

Si mund të prodhohej një media më pjesëmarrëse për këtë komunitet?

Si mund të ndërtohej një media alternative si radio?

Cilat janë problemet? Po mundësitë

ANNEX III – Transcription example: Focus Group 1

6 Nëntor 2014

FOCUS GROUP

UET CENTRE-ABC FOUNDATION-IRCA

Mirëseardhja dhe fjala e hapjes

Drejtoresha Ekzekutive e Qendrës UET, Znj. Blerjana Bino bën prezantimin e saj dhe te Qendrës UET, gjithashtu bën prezantimin paraprak të pikave kryesore që do të trajtohen në këtë takim. Ajo anonçon dhe takimin e radhës për të organizuar Fokus grupin e dytë, i cili do të mbahet më datë 12 Nëntor 2014, në orën 15:30.

Menjëherë pas saj, bën prezantimin, përfaqësuesja e Fondacionit ABC.

FOCUS GROUP (Zbardhja e bisedës)

Diskutimi që u zhvillua me fokus grupin u regjistrua nga fillimi deri në fund dhe zbardhjen e bisedës do të mund t'a gjeni më poshtë.

SEKSIONI I-rë

Folësi 1: Quhem xxx. Studioj pranë UET, viti i parë Master në degën Shkenca Politike. Në të njëjtën kohë po zhvilloj praktikën pranë Qendrës UET. Unë për të dytën herë po angazhohem në një projekt të kësaj natyre, që lidhet me gjithëpërfshirjen sociale dhe zhvillimin e kapaciteteve të të rinjëve Rom. Ndaj, përfitoj t'ju falenderoj që më mirëprisni në grupin tuaj.

Folësi 2: Përshëndetje, unë jam studente në vitin e parë Master, për Gazetari pranë Universitetit të Tiranës dhe për mua është hera e parë që marr pjesë në një takim të tillë.

Folësi 3: Përshëndetje, quhem Inva, studente për Marrëdhënie me publikun, Komunikim, pranë UET dhe për mua është hera e parë që marr pjesë në një aktivitet të tillë. Faleminderit.

Folësi 5: Unë jam xxx, studioj për Marrëdhënie me Publikun, Komunikim, së bashku me Inven, madje jemi në të njëjtën klasë, gjithashtu jam koordinatorë e korpusit Rom, si vullnetare, pranë Institutit Të Kulturës Rome në Shqipëri. Në një fokus Grup është hera e parë që marr pjesë, por kam qënë pjesë e trajnimeve të mëparshme të zhvilluara nga Qendra UET dhe IRCA.

Folësi 6: Përshëndetje të gjithëve, xx, kam mbaruar studimet për Marrëdhënie me Publikun, Komunikim, pranë UET. Prej vitesh jam aktiviste e çështjeve Rome dhe Egjiptiane në Shqipëri dhe aktualisht punoj pranë Komisionerit për çështjet që lidhen me Anti-diskriminimin.

Folësi 7: xxx, studente e arkitekturës pranë universitetit Polis, vullnetare tek IRCA dhe për mua është hera e parë që marr pjesë në një fokus grup.

Folësi 8: Përshëndetje unë jam, xxx, jam studente panë Fakultetit të Shkencave Mjekësore Teknike, dega Infermieri e Përgjithëshme, viti i dytë. Gjithashtu, unë jam vullnetare pranë IRCA. Pjesëmarrja në një fokus grup në lidhje me trajnimin për median është një eksperiencë e re për mua.

Folësi 9: Përshëndetje, unë quhem xx, jam studente në Fakultetin e Shkencave Mjekësore për Infermieri të Përgjithëshme. Në fakt, është hera e parë që marr pjesë në një organizim të tillë.

Folësi 10: Përsëndetje, xxx. Unë jam vullnetar pranë Korpusit të Paqes dhe gjithashtu tek IRCA. Eksperiencat e mia mediatike lidhen me pjesëmarrjen time në një Radio spanjolle.

Folësi 11: Përsëndetje, unë jam xxx dhe jam studente në vitin e dytë këtu në UET. Momentalisht, jam asistente administrative pranë IRCA dhe për mua është hera e parë që marr pjesë në një Fokus Grup.

Folësi 12: Unë jam xxx, studentë në Fakultetin e Gjuhëve të Huja. Aktualisht jam në vitin e dytë Master për Mësuesi Franceze. Jam e angazhuar dhe pranë IRCA si këshilluese karriere, në të njëjtën kohë kam qënë shumë shpesh pjesë e fokus grupeve dhe shpresoj shumë që dhe këtë radhë të dalim me disa rezultate të cilat do të mund të n'a ndihmojnë më pas.

Folësi 13: xxx, drejtoj që prej tre vitesh IRCA, një institut i cili ka tre fokuse kryesore: institucionalizimi i Kulturës Rome, Këshillimin e karrierës për të rinjtë dhe studentët Rom, pjesëmarrjen dhe sigurimin e aksesit të barabartë në jetën publike dhe në shërbime. Është kënaqësi bashkëpunimi i radhës me Qendrën UET, pasi eksperiencat e mëparshme kanë treguar se bashkëpunimet tona janë të shëndetshme. Ndaj, unë nuk kam asnjë dyshim në lidhje me këtë bashkëpunim, i cili ashtu si dhe të tjerat mbështet fort kauzën e përfshirjes sociale. Shpresoj të realizojmë një fokus grup me diskutime të frytshme, në mënyrë që t'i japim vlerë në fund produktit final.

Folësi 14: Përsëndetje, unë jam xxx, eksperte projektesh pranë Fondacionit ABC. Ju përgëzoj për këtë iniciativë dhe ju uroj shumë suksese.

SEKSIONI II-të

Folësi 1: Shumë faleminderit. Në këtë mënyrë, nga prezantimi juaj, kuptuam dhe nga vini. Në fakt kisha menduar t'ju pyesja se sa të përfshirë jeni në komunitet dhe me çështjet që kanë të bëjnë me të Drejtat e Njeriut dhe me të drejtat tuaja konkretisht si të rinj, por nga çfarë ju prezantuat, kuptova që tashmë ju jeni aktivistë të përfshirë, qoftë si studentë, qoftë nëpërmjet strukturave të ngritura nga IRCA. Kjo është një gjë pozitive dhe besoj se kjo do të ushqejë dhe më shumë diskutimin. Gjithashtu, jam shumë e kënaqur që kemi përfaqësues dhe nga KMD, por në këtë rast dhe si individ për të treguar se sa e njeh nga afër realitetin. Ne, jemi të gjithë të ndërgjegjshëm, ju pak më shumë se ne për shumë sfida me të cilat ballafaqohet komuniteti Rom në strehim, arsimim, edukim, shëndetësi, punësim. Padyshim, të gjitha këto janë shumë të rëndësishme, por ne kemi vendosur të ndalemi në mënyrë specifike tek çështjet që lidhen me përfaqësimin në media ose të aftësitë komunikuese dhe mediatike. Kjo do të thotë se ne, duam të kuptojmë se sa mundësi keni ju për të marrë pjesë ose për t'u përfaqësuar në Median në Shqipëri. A ka vërtet mundësi komuniteti Rom dhe si mund të përmirësohet kjo situatë?

Në shërbim të përmirësimit të situatës aktuale, të të drejtave të këtij komuniteti dhe në mënyrë që të arrijmë atë që ne sëbashku synojmë të arrijmë, pra të një shoqërie ku të gjithë të trajtohen të barabartë, do të dëshiroja shumë që të flisnim lirshëm. Dua të ndajmë së bashku eksperiencat tuaja se si ju vetë e keni djerë apo përjetuar deri tani këtë çështje në median masive (televizion, radio, gazeta) që n'a bombardojnë në mënyrë konstante me informacion. Pra, si e keni përjetuar ju, si komunitet Rom, çështjen e përfaqësimit mediatik?

Folësi 2: Të flasim për përfaqësimin e komunitetit Rom në media është pak e vështirë sepse nëse shikojmë pjesën më të madhe të emisioneve, lajmeve apo shtypin e shkruar do të shikojmë se komuniteti Rom zë një hapësirë shumë të vogël, përjashtoj rastet kur ka një lajm boom siç mund të jetë festa e 8 Prillit kur janë prezentë individë që përfaqësojnë institucionet publike ose institucionet ndërkombëtare. Vetëm atëherë i kushtohet vëmendja ose në rastet kur aktivistët

organizojnë protesta apo marshime. Ajo që tërhoqi më tepër vëmendje në media ishin rastet e debimit të Romëve nga strehimi i tyre, duke nisur me vitin 2011, dëbimi nga stacioni i trenit, 2013 në pallatin me shigjeta dhe rasti i ditëve të sotme, dëbimi si rezultat i ndërtimit të unazës së madhe.

Së fundmi kemi parë situatën që u krijua nga ndeshja Shqipëri-Serbi dhe si rrjedhojë e situatës së krijuar, mediat n'a ofruan disa të dhëna të cilat flasin për Shqipërinë e madhe, e cila shtrihej në territore të ndryshme, por asnjë herë nuk kemi parë e dëgjuar që mediat shqipëtare të flasin për Komunitetin Rom, për shtrirjen e tyre, madje nuk e targetojnë si pjesë të territoreve shqipëtare. Ka ndodhur vetëm në të paktat raste, kur ne vetë i kemi ftuar për të folur rreth kulturës Rome.

Folësi 3: Nuk ka rol aktiv nga mediat për të pasqyruar vlerat, kulturën gjuhën që ka komuniteti Rom. Të vetmet raste janë atëherë kur janë të pranishëm ndërkombëtarët apo ambasadorë të ndryshëm.

Folësi 4: Mesa mbaj mend unë lajmet që kanë bërë bujë për komunitetin Rom kanë qenë lajmet negative, përmendim këtu lajmin e shitjes së një fëmije në Greqi, që i përkiste komunitetit Rom apo kur u rrahën pranë koshit të plehrave në Korçë. Fatkeqësisht, asnjëherë nuk kemi dëgjuar diçka pozitive. Për shembull kemi rastin e Sead Kazanxhiu, që ka bërë shumë punime të mira dhe asnjëherë nuk kemi parë që një media t'a marrë për t'i krijuar një hapësirë të caktuar këtij personi.

Folësi 5: Siç e dime të gjithë, komuniteti Rom është një grup i skajuar dhe si i tillë ka risqet e veta të mëdha. Pjesëmarrja e tij në median e shkruar ose vizive mund të konsiderohet rreth 3 %. Pyetja ishte çfarë n'a prek kur kemi parë lajmet për romët dhe mbi romët? Une personalisht gjithmonë kam marrë një feedback negativ nga media dhe flasim këtu për media me imakt të madh në shoqëri, siç janë Top Channel apo TV Klan, kryesisht ky i fundit. Romët kanë një histori, kanë një emër, një gjuhë, kanë një flamur dhe absolutisht në media nuk duhet të përdorësh fjalë ofenduese. Tek TV KLAN, flas për të pasi më ka tërhequr më tepër vëmendje, gjithmonë ka përdorur terma fyes dhe një nga lajmet që mua më kujtohet, nga i cili kam reaguar menjëherë në Facebook, ka qenë në lidhje me tregëtarët që shesin në anë të lumit Lana. Një nga gazetarët e këtij televizioni, Reis Çiço, të cilit dhe nuk i falet për hir të jetëgjatësisë mediatike, fliste për këtë situatë me përbuzje, madje pamjet shoqëroheshin në sfond me muzikë tallava. Ky është një diskriminim i drejtpërdrejtë që na bëhet në si komunitet. Ajo që dua të them është që mediat e kanë për detyrë të njohin të gjitha grupet shoqërore që bëjnë pjesë në Shqipëri dhe t'i respektojnë ato, por deri më sot ka qenë iniciativa jonë për tu shfaqur në media por jo se media ka patur dëshirën për të n'a shfaqur ne.

Folësi 6: Kisha një koment në lidhje me atë çfarë tha vajza. Lajmi i dhënë nga Reis Çiço, bëhet nga pjesa tjetër e stafit, që do të thotë se ky gazetar, është vetëm në rolin e lexuesit, nëse e marrim në një plan të gjërë, media shqipëtare nuk është asgjëkundi, sepse pjesa më e madhe e atyre pseudogazetarëve janë persona të cilët nuk kanë shumë njohuri mbi gazetarinë e mirëfilltë. Së dyti, mendoj se komuniteti rom, nuk duhet t'a konsumojë problemin brenda përbrenda. Unë, nëse nuk do të isha mikeshë me Aurorën që i përket komunitetit rom, nuk do të isha fare në dijeni në lidhje me të gjitha çështjet që ata shpesh diskutojnë mes tyre. Pra, problemi qëndron se komuniteti rom nuk duhet t'i konsumojë problemet vetëm brenda përbrenda komunitetit të tyre, por duhet që pjesa tjetër të kuptojë dhe shikojë që komuniteti rom ka një kulturë dhe shumë gjera pozitive.

SEKSIONI III-të

Folësi 1: Të gjitha analizat tuaja ishin vërtet shunë interesante. Ju, u shprehët rreth përjetimeve tuaja në lidhje me përfaqësimin tuaj mediatik në Shqipëri dhe rëndësinë që zënë lajmet në lidhje me Komunitetin Rom në media. Theksuat se rastet më të mëdha ku ju bëheni pjesë e edicioneve informative kryesisht, janë ato raste kur ka ndodhur një ngjarje e shëmtuar e cila i targetohet lehtësisht këtij komuniteti apo rastet kur ndodh ndonjë event dhe pranë jush vjen ndonjë

përfaqësues ndërkombëtar, pra me pak fjalë gjithmonë në ato raste kur ka ndodhur diçka që përbën për median lajm. Dhe kjo është e kuptueshme, pasi po flasim për median dhe në logjikën e medias kështu funksionon. Gjithashtu, ju folët për individë mediatik të cilët flasin rreth jush me tone të ashpra dhe fyese ose argumentuat se në fakt është vetë struktura apo organizimi i vetë medias që e bën të vështirë që t'i futesh me themel këtyre çështjeve. Prandaj pyetja që mua me vjen natyrshëm është: Cilat janë problemet kryesore që hasim ne për mënyrën se si media masive n'a pasqyron apo si ajo mbulon çështjet tona dhe mbi të gjitha si mund të reagojmë ne për të shprehur versionin tonë? Një mënyrë shumë interesante pa dyshim është reagimi në facebook, por jo të gjithë kanë një të tillë. Kjo do të thotë se aty n'a ndjekin vetëm disa individë. Pra si mund të gjejmë një mënyrë alternative për t'u shprehur?

Folësi 2: Të them diçka përpara se të nisim diskutimet. Media sot, nuk pasqyron vetëm problematika të caktuara ose situatën e komunitetit Rom, media është paragjyqese edhe për shumë ngjarje të tjera që ndodhin ose nuk paraqet më të mirën. Të gjithë ankohen që media vetëm shfaq vrasje, dhunë dhe nuk shfaq asgjë për kulturën shqipëtare apo të minoriteteve të tjera. Prandaj problemi që unë shoh me median në Shqipëri është më i gjerë.

Folësi 1: Kjo është e vërtetë sepse jetojmë në atë që quhet kultura e konsumit masiv e kombinuar me elementë të kapitalizmit, po këtu pastaj dalim në një diskutim për mënyrën se si funksionon media si e tillë dhe në fakt nuk janë vetëm sfida të shoqërisë Shqipëtare por dhe të CNN, BBC , pra dhe të shoqërive shumë herë më të zhvilluar se ne. Kam përshtypjen se ju, që studioni gazetari apo Marrëdhënie me Publikun, Komunikim bëni lëndë të veçanta pikërisht për këtë gjë. Sistemi mediatik, si funksionon, çfarë shkon dhe çfarë jo, ne duhet t'a marrim në konsideratë këtë dhe shumë faleminderit që e solle. Kjo do të thotë që media së bashku me dinamikat e saj, ka dhe shumë sfida.

Folësi 3: Doja t'i bashkangjitesha pak vazjës që pohoi pak më parë se media është një biznes dhe është në kërkim të lajmit. Lajm për ata është kur komuniteti Rom grindet me dikë , ndodh një dëbim, por nga ana tjetër unë besoj se kjo është diçka që ne si të rinj e kemi lejuar. Çfarë mund të bëjmë ne? Ne si të rinj, duke ditur se si funksionon media, duke ditur interesat e medias, mund të bëjmë diçka si të ftojme mediat , për shembull, mund të ftojme delegacionin e BE dhe të bisedojmë për shembujt pozitiv. Kjo do të shfaqet patjetër në media sepse personazhet që do të jenë të ftuar, janë personazhe që bëjnë intererers për median. Ne duhet të jemi të vetëdijëshëm, që për sa kohë, ne vetë, nuk arrijmë të bëjmë përpjekje për t'a thyer mentalitetin që media ka krijuar, ashtu siç ka krijuar dhe pjesa tjetër e shoqërisë, që Romët identifikohen me tallavanë, me shitjen e rrobave të përdorura, me mbledhjene kanaçeve dhe skrapit, gjithçka do të jetë shumë e vështirë. Marr shembullin e Portokallisë, Skrapi, personazhi që ishte sezonin e kaluar, në këtë show televiziv, ishte një hap serioz për të ndryshuar mentalitetin që është krijuar për komunitetin Rom. Ishte hera e parë që një personazh i komunitetit tonë vishej me të tilla vlera. Jo më larg se një vit më parë kam patur një debat në televizionin Publik Shqipëtar (TVSH), ku një gazetar ishte fokusuar tek çështjet që lidheshin me komunitetin Rom duke mos u përpjekur të shoh apo kuptojë realisht se cilat janë problemet që e shqetësojnë këtë komunitet. Kjo për mua do të thotë, të shohësh një pikturë, por nuk përpiqesh aspak të kuptosh konceptin e saj, apo atë që ka dashur autori të shpreh.

Folësi 1: Në fakt si mund t'a evidentojmë veten?

Folësi 4: Realisht, shpesh n'a ka ndodhur që brenda grupit tonë kemi qënë të pasigurt në zgjedhjet që na është dashur të bëjmë për të prezantuar veten mediatikisht. Ne e njohim shumë mirë njëri tjetrin dhe i dimë vlerat e gjithësecilit, por kur vjen problemi për t'u përballur me televizionin e kemi të vështirë të shprehemi. Kjo është një mangësi e jona, prandaj ne duhet të mësohemi me pjesën e të qenit person publik, në mënyrë që të promovohemi mediatikisht dhe të japim një mesazh pozitiv për atë pjesë të shoqërisë që nuk na njeh. Personalisht më ka nodhur të ballafaqohem me

njerëz të shtangur kur i jam prezantuar se vij nga komuniteti Rom. Kjo si rezultat i të gjitha fjalëve që qarkullojnë rreth nesh. Unë kam punuar në një televizion në Korçë dhe aty më është dashur të dal e të bëj disa intervista. Njerëzit habiteshin me mua dhe kur i shpjegoja se si unë ka dhe shumë studentë të tjerë Rom që posedojnë aftësi të jashtëzakonshme, ata çuditëshin gjithmonë e më shumë. Prandaj ne duhat t'a promovojmë më shumë vetën tonë, pasi vetëm kështu do t'i japim mundësi dhe të tjerëve të na njohin më mirë.

Folësi 1: Me qënë se jemi pikërisht tek promovimi, unë dua të dalim tek promovimi përmes medias. Ashtu sic e thamë dhe më parë, për të depërtuar në axhendën e mediave të rëndësishme në vend, si Top Channel, Klan, etj është e vështirë, atëherë çfarë mbetet në dorën tonë? Si mund të promovohen “ambasadorët” e komunitetit Rom? Rasti i televizionit në Korçë është një rast shumë i suksesshëm, një iniciativë e mirë, që ka funksionuar. Prandaj, duam të dijmë diçka më shumë rreth kësaj eksperience, për të patur një shembull pozitiv se si ju vetë keni kapërcyer izolimin mediatik.

Folësi 4: Historia e këtij emisioni është shumë interesante. Drejtori i televizionit në fjalë ishte pjesë e shoqërisë civile dhe ai dëshironte të promovonte komunitetin Rom duke bërë të ditura problematikat e komunitetit. Një ditë ai ftoi një mikun e tij gazetar duke i kërkuar favor që të bënte publik një lajm që lidhje me komunitetin Rom. Menjëherë pas kësaj bisede, ai mendoi se ndoshta do të ishte më mirë të realizonte vetë një program televiziv që lidhej drejt për drejt me problematikat e komunitetit Rom dhe kry program fillimisht ishte në kuadër të një projekti financiar nga UNICEF, e më pas u financua nga një Fondacion në Budapest. Kështu mori jetë dhe ky program, pra thjesht nga nevoja për të patur një mënyrë për të shprehur problematikën e komunitetit. Fillimet kanë qënë të vështira, por fatmirësisht programi ecën mirë dhe njerëzit kanë shfaqur interes për të. Emisioni shfaqet në televizionin Publik Shqipëtar.

Folësi 1: Si mund ta përdorim median për të arritur interesat tona që po diskutojmë këtu?

Folësi 5: Një nga gjërat që është bërë duke mbështetur të rinj Rom dhe jo Rom në fushën e gazetarisë, lidhet me një sipërmarrje që organizoi Radio Club FM, ku kam marrë pjesë me Inën e Xheksonin. Ky ishte një aktivitet në kuadër të aktiviteteve të mbështetura nga SOROS dhe aty mësuam se si të realizojmë një reportazh. Aty patëm hapësirë të krijojmë atë që ne dinim të bënim më mirë dhe t'a promovonim vetë atë. Kjo do të thotë se mund të zgjidhnim temën, të realizonin po vetë produksionin dhe të gjenim mënyra për t'a shfaqur punën tonë. Punimet tona u transmetuan në Radion Club FM, gjithashtu ne i postuam në profilet tona në Facebook apo në Youtube.

Folësi 1: Ideja, prodhimi, i këtyre realizimeve radiofonike, ishte tërësisht e juaj? Pra, ju kishit lirinë e plotë të zgjidhnit temat që ju dëshironit?

Folësi 6: Ne, kishim të paracaktuara 5 fusha, ndërsa temat idiskutonim sëbashku. Për ato mbi të cilat bienim dakort, vendosnim të punonim. Një nga temat që u trajtua me video ishte një dokumentar për komunitetin Rom në zonën e Shkozës, komunitet që jeton në barake dhe në kushte shumë të vështira. Kam qënë unë dhe disa të rinj të tjerë që shoqëroheshim nga operatori, menaxheri dhe Blendi Salaj. Kjo ishte shumë e rëndësishme për ne, pasi për herë të parë media i dha “zë” Komunitetit Rom. Gazetari, Blendi Salaj i drejtoi një pyetje një prej pjesëtarëve të komunitetit që jeton në atë zonë: “Qarkullojmë mendime se romët nuk kanë aftësi të integrohen në aspektin ekonomik, pra të fuqizohen ekonomikisht dhe se i pëlqen puna e tyre që nuk fal aspak dinjitet siç është mbledhja e mjeteve të riciklueshme”. Hektori, banori në fjalë, që kishte ngritur një biznes të vogël, kishte hapur një bilardo dhe playstation, tha se nuk është aspak e vërtetë dhe këto lloj gjykimesh vijnë nga ata njerëz të cilët nuk kanë aspak informacion në lidhje me Komunitetin Rom apo aftësitë që mund të ketë ky komunitet. Sipas tij, këtij komuniteti, i mungojnë mjetet financiare për të ngritur investime më të mëdha, por jo dëshira apo aftësitë drejtuese.

Folësi 1: Dhe kjo që ju sapo pohuat, u realizua përmes një metode alternative, duke ju krijuar mundësinë që ju vetë të prodhoni produkte të caktuara mediatike, të cilat u transmetuan në radio dhe pastaj nga radio u morën dhe u vendosën në youtube apo forma të tjera të medias alternative, siç janë Facebook apo Twitter apo deri tek tek radio online. Pra, jemi larguar nga biseda e mëparshme ku folëm me pak “mëri”, me të drejtë, për mediat e mëdha dhe tani po shohim se si ndërthurja e këtyra metodave, në fakt janë shembujt pozitiv, ku komuniteti ka mundësi që të ngrejë zërin, të japë perspektivën e vet dhe t’i tejkalohet vetizolimit, qoftë përmes emisionit që është ndërtuar në Korçë por që shfaqet dhe në Radio Televizionin Shqipëtar, qoftë përmes këtyre elementëve siç ishte trajnimi tek CLUB FM. Pra në këtë linjë, ju mund t’i kundërviheni lehtësisht izolimit mediatik që mund t’ju ofrojnë mediat e mëdha në Shqipëri. Ajo që duam të dijmë është se sa i përdorni ju format e reja të komunikimit përmes mediave të reja sic janë: Facebook, Youtube, Blogjet, etj?

Folësi 7: Në fakt diskutimin tim do të doja t’a shtrija në disa pika. Së pari, çështjet e komunitetit Rom nuk kanë një mbulim të gjerë mediatik. I vetmi mbulim i gjerë mediatik, por në kontekstin sasior dhe aspak cilësor, është ai i dëbimit që ju bë komunitetit Rom në vitin 2011. Në vitin 2013 ndodhi e njëjta histori dhe këtë radhë u imenjova personalisht për të monitoruar mediat shqipëtare. Kështu, monitorova gazetarët, spikërat, reporterët por dhe facebook, kur flitej për këtë çështje.

Një tjetër pikë ku doja të ndalesha lidhet me strukturën që kanë mediat sot, ose më saktë me trajtimin që i bëjnë çështjeve të caktuara. Sot, ne shohim që ka vetëm dy rubrika që lëvrohen më shumë, ajo sociale dhe aktualiteti. Ajo që mua më ka interesuar është padyshim mbulimi mediatik i çështjeve që lidhen me komunitetin ku unë bëj pjesë. Mund të përjashtoj vetëm festën e 8 Prillit, e cila futet në aspektin kulturor dhe historik, si një nga eventet e vetme që media pasqyron në ekran apo në shtyp. Një tjetër rast që mbaj mend ka qënë publikimi i librit të Fatos Baxhaku-t dhe Klodiana Kapo-s që trajton në një pjesë fare të vogël, historinë e komunitetit Rom dhe të realitetit në kohën e Zogut. Prandaj, mendoj se duhet të ketë më shumë rubrika, kryesisht ato me natyrë kulturore, ku të flitet dhe për kulturën Rome e cila ka jo pak larmishmëri.

Një tjetër pjesë që dua të diskutoj lidhet me fushën e edukimit. Gazetarët në Shqipëri, fatkeqësisht nuk karakterizohen nga fryma e multikulturalizmit. Ata shpesh herë e trajtojnë një ngjarje sispas perceptimeve të tyre subjektive dhe shumë rrallë e trajtojnë një çështje me objektivizëm. Prandaj, mendoj se në Shqipëri është domosdoshmëri edukimin i gazetarëve.

Unë mendoj se çështja Rome duhet të shtrihet në një spektër më të gjerë se sa vetëm në edicionet informative, këtu e kam fjalë se çështjet tona mund të trajtohen dhe në show të ndryshme televizive, emisione me karakter kulturor, etj. Por që të arrihen të gjitha këto kërkesa, duhet me patjetër iniciativa e dikujt.

Një tjetër qasje që dua të trajtoj është fakti se shoqëria shqipëtare ose më saktë media në Shqipëri, nuk e trajton çështjen Rome si pjesë integrale të shoqërisë shqipëtare, por e analizon atë si një pjesë të izoluar të kësaj shoqërie.

Në të njëjtën kohë, ajo që dalloj si shqetësuese është dhe fakti se shpesh gazetarët, vënë tituj me doza të larta subjektiviteti. Pra, ata e ndërtojnë titullin duke mos treguar fare kujdes dhe duke bërë shpesh të mundur që ky titull lajmi, të ketë efekte negative për komunitetin. Nga një monitorim që kam bërë, kam vënë re se gjithmonë kur flitet për vjedhjen e kapakëve të pusetave, etiketohet sikur e ka vjedhur një njeri i komunitetit Rom. Dhe mund të jetë kështu, por ajo që mua më shqetëson lidhet me faktin se këtë çështje nuk e lidhin me individin që mund të ketë kryer vjedhjen, por pohohet gjerësisht se vjedhjet kryehen nga komuniteti Rom. Kjo situatë, ndikon djeshëm në perceptimet që krijon shoqëria në të tërësi për Romët.

Momenti i fundit ku dua të ndaloj lidhet me cilësinë e lajmit. Në këtë pikë jemi shumë të varfër. Mjafton të kujtojmë që gazetarët e huaj, duhet të hulumtojnë në vende të ndryshme për të bërë një lajm, për të qënë më pranë qytetarëve, për të marrë perceptimin e tyre rreth një çështje dhe për ta ndërtuar lajmin në formën më të mirë, në mënyrë që dhe publikun t'a orjentojë drejt qasjeve të ndryshme.

Folësi 1: Mungon analiza dhe kjo nuk është vetëm për çështje që lidhen me komunitetin Rom, por në fakt është një anomali e sistemit në tërësi. Pra, këto janë disa mangësi të mediave, por ne jemi tek pjesa se si t'i përdorim mediat e reja, kryesisht ato sociale, median aktive për të kaluar pikërisht këtë gjë, skajimin, izolimin? Sa i keni përdorur, si i keni përjetuar, në mënyrë popullore, sa ja keni ndjerë lezetin?

Folësi 8: Emisioni për të cilin folëm pak më lartë, në fakt u bë më i njohur në publik në momentin që u anonçua nëpërmjet internetin. Kjo për arsye se orari në të cilin transmetohej në televizion ishte i papërshtatshëm. Pra, mediat sociale këtë rast n'a ndihmuan duke u bërë më efektive.

Folësi 1: Ky ishte një shembull shumë i mirë. Ky ishte qëllimi im, për të kuptuar se sa shumë informacion merrni nga mediat sociale dhe sa shumë i përdorni ato për qëllimet e punës suaj në komunitet? Nuk dua thjesht të di se sa shpenzoni duke qëndruar në facebook, apo twitter për veten tuaj, por për qëllime të punës dhe aktivizimit tuaj për komunitetin?

Folësi 9: Po marr rastin e kuotave për studentët Rom dhe Egjiptian që kishte shpallur Ministria e Arsimit. Ministria kishte publikuar në media, në televizion aftanin për këto aplikime dhe ne, deri ditën e fundit kur mbylleshin aplikimet nuk kishim asnjë informacion. Fatmirësisht, ditën e fundit, shefja ime shkon dhe mëson se kishte filluar procesi dhe ne nuk ishim në dijeni. Falë ndërhyrjes së zonjës në fjalë, afati i aplikimeve u shty dhe ne e publikuam informacionin në rrjetet sociale nga ku informacioni u përhap me shpejtësi. Unë, për shembull, nuk shoh fare televizor dhe çdo informacion e marr nga interneti.

Folësi 10: Ajo që unë kam evidentuar është një tjetër situatë. Është e vërtetë që sot lajmi më shumë vjen nga interneti, por në lidhje me radiot, ajo që unë vë re është se lajmet që shfaqen në televizion, gjithmonë në lidhje me komunitetin Rom, nuk i dëgjojmë kurrë në radio.

Folësi 1: Radio është shumë interesante pasi mund ta kesh në sfond në çdo moment, ndërkohë që je në lëvizje apo je duke u marrë me diçka tjetër. I kthehemi përsëri mediave sociale. Më flisni pak për praktikën tuaj me mediat sociale online.

Folësi 2: Protesat, i organizojmë nëpërmjet facebook.

Folësi 3: Unë dua të them që ne në çdo moment jemi në facebook. Kur jemi në mësim jem i në facebook, kur jemi në autobus po ashtu, kur jemi në shtëpi futemi në facebook, pra në çdo moment ne jemi ose në facebook, ose në twitter apo instagram. Çdo njoftim, çdo informacion në lidhje me kuotat, bursat, trajnimet, vendin, i bëjmë të gjitha aty.

Folësi 1: Mendoni se mos jeni duke përjësuar këtu ata individë të komunitetit Rom që nuk kanë akses në mediat sociale?

Folësi 4: Puna ime lidhet me përdorimin e përditshëm të mediave sociale. Unë në punë duhet të monitoroj çdo ditë gazetën, mediat sociale dhe nëpërmejet këtyre të fundit hedh tema të ndryshme që lidhen me komunitetin për diskutim. Duke qënë se miqtë e mi në facebook janë dhe të huaj shpesh më duhet të ngre çështje dhe në gjuhën angleze dhe në këtë mënyrë i përfshij dhe ata në diskutime. Nga ana tjetër duke shkuar në komunitet ne u japim atyre të gjitha informacionet që dëgjojmë dhe i informojmë rreth ngjarjeve që prekin vetë komunitetin, kjo është një punë

interaktive që ne bëjmë me njëri-tjetrin. Shpesh herë i printoj disa lajme dhe i çoj pranë komunitetin Rom në formë të printuar.

Folësi 1: Mënyra e ndërthurjes së marrjes së informacionit online me këtë lloj forme tradicionale, siç është printimi dhe shpërndarja është shumë interesante dhe vjen në përputhje me nevojat dhe karakteristikat që ka grupi tek i cili po adreson lajmet.

Folësi 5: Unë nuk jam gjithë kohën në terren, por kemi shumë të rinj që kanë punën e tyre të përditshme në terren dhe janë gjatë gjithë kohës aty për t'i informuar.

SEKSIONI IV

Folësi 1: Cilët janë ato element tek të cilat ju dëshironi të mbështeteni për të zhvilluar aftësitë tuaja ose çfarë mendoni ju se ka nevojë më shumë komuniteti Rom për sa i takon medias dhe pjesëmarrjes në media? Ju kujtoj se kemi një seri trajnimesh gjatë muajve Janar dhe Shkurt.

Folësi 2: Ajo që ne kemi nevojë lidhet me ndërmjetësimin, do të thotë se ne duam të kemi kontakt me personazhe televizive apo gazetarë të njohur. Kështu, ata, pasi të n'a kenë njohur mund të na ftojnë në programet e tyre. Unë, personalisht e kam ëndërr të jem një herë e ftuar tek Blendi Fevziu, në emisionin e tij Opinion. Sa herë e shoh mendoj se dhe ne si komunitet Rom duhet të dalim aty, të na shohin, të tregojmë vlerat tona dhe ndoshta njerëzit të fillojnë të ndryshojnë mendimin që kanë krijuar për ne.

Folësi 1: Pra, të bëjmë përpjekje për t'u bërë pjesë e mediave masive, të gjejmë mekanizmat se si të aksesosh te mediat masive.

Folësi 2: Përgatitja për përballjen me median duke patur kompetenca mediatike.

Folësi 3: Të krijohen reportazhe apo rubrika për çështjen Rome.

Folësi 4: Po mendoja për personat që nuk kanë akses në median online. Mund të krijohet një rubrikë e posaçme, qoftë dhe një herë në javë, në një gazetë, ku të flitet për çështjet Rome dhe në këtë mënyrë do të kenë akses dhe personat që lexojnë vetëm shtypin e shkruar.

Folësi 1: Mapo tek UET, ka suplementin akademia ose studenti dhe pasqyron çdo gjë që ka lidhje me universitetin. Në këtë logjikë mund të bëhet e njëjta gjë me suplementë që kanë në fokus kulturën.

Folësi 5: Duhet të jemi kreativë dhe të mendojmë diçka që përbën interes për shikuesin.

Folësi 6: Unë dua të ndalemi në një tjetër çështje. Pikërisht tek gjuha e urrejtjes që shihet dhe tek mediat sociale. Duhet të kemi kujdes me publikimet sepse jetojmë në një shoqëri që ndikohet nga mendimi i tjetrit dhe këtu dua të përmend rastin e Zhakut, nga e cila u bë më pas dhe një lajm për gazetatat dhe ku gjuha e urrejtjes ishte shumë e lartë.

Folësi 7: Doja të thoja që shumë shpesh gjuhën e urrejtjes ne e nxisim vetë. Mendoj se duhet të krijojmë një mënyrë shumë të kujdesshme për të shpalosur kauzat tona.

Folësi 8: Në vijim të asaj që pohoi Klaudia, ne duhe të të tregohemi të kujdesshëm. Kujtoj këtu rastin kur Gazeta Shqip trajtoi çështjen e rrembimit apo abuzimit të një fëmije. Këtë çështje nuk e trajtoi si një çështje apo problematikë të vendit tonë, por e targetoi si një fenomen i cili ndodh vetëm brenda komunitetit Rom. Komentet pas këtij lajmi karakterizoheshin nga një gjuhë e mbushur me urrejtje dhe poshtëruese.

Folësi 9: Një ide tjetër është si të krijojmë fushata advokimi online, marr këtu shembullin e Barack Obama, e cila për të tërhequr votuesit amerikanë pati goxha rezultate pozitive.

Folësi 10: Duhet të përdorim sarkazmën në rastet kur duam të shkruajmë dhe ndajmë diçka.

Folësi 11: Duhet të përputhim trendet e ditës, për të bërë një lajm tërheqës që lidhet me komunitetin Rom. Nga eksperiencia nga unë vij, rreth 97% e të punësuarëve ishin anglez dhe vetëm një pakicë e vogël latine. Sigurisht, që të influenconin ne si pakicë një lajm ishte shumë e vështirë. Prandaj ajo që ne zgjodhëm të bëjmë, ishte që të bëheshim pjesë e shoqërisë në tërësi dhe të komunikojmë si shoqëri dhe jo si pakicë. Duke e zbritur bisedën në territorin Shqipëtar, ju duhet të angazhoheni në diskutimet e ditës. Për shembull, jo çfarë mendojnë Romët për reformën territoriale, por çfarë mendoni ju si person.

Folësi 1: Një nga kufizimet tona është dhe koha. Kështu që ne duhet t'a mbyllim këtë fokus grup dhe nëse gjatë kësaj kohe ju vijnë mendime apo ide, ju lutem të n'a shkruani. Ajo që kemi menduar për fazën e dytë është krijimi i bashkëpunëtorëve, ndaj kemi folur dhe me shoqatën e gazetarëve. Për momentin jemi në fazën e parë ku kanë më tepër vlerë, perceptimet tuaja dhe zgjidhjet që ju mendojnë të jepni. Ju falenderoj shumë duke lënë takimin e radhës më datë 12 Nëntor, në të njëjtën sallë, për të organizuar Fokus Grupin e dytë.

FUND

Ky takim zgjati rreth 90 minuta dhe në të morën pjesë: Drejtoresha Ekzekutive e Qendrës UET, përfaqësuesja e Fondacionit ABC, Drejtori i IRCA, 13 përfaqësues të komunitetit Rom dhe një praktikante pranë Qendrës UET.

ANNEX IV – Qualitative unstructured data from Focus Groups 1, 2, 3

Gjetjet nga takimet me 3 Fokus Grupet me të rinjtë e Komunitetit Rom

Në kuadër të Projektit “Fuqizimi i të Rinjëve Rom Përmes Zhvillimit të Kapaciteteve dhe Edukimit për Median Alternative” u realizuan dy Fokus Grupe me pjesëtarë të komunitetit Rom. Takimi me pjesëtarët e komunitetit, nëpërmjet fokus grupeve ishte parashikuar si pjesë e fazës së parë të projektit., ku qëllimi kryesor ishte analizimi i formave të ndryshme të mediave dhe se si ato ndikojnë në kundërvënien ndaj skajimit përmes prodhimit të ligjërimeve alternative përkundër atyre dominuese.

Takimet u zhvilluan në dy ditë të ndryshme dhe takimi i parë u mbajt më datë 6 Nëntor 2014, ndërsa i dyti me datë 12 Nëntor 2014, pranë Universitetit Europian të Tiranës. Në secilin prej tyre krahas anëtarëve të komunitetit Rom, morën pjesë dhe përfaqësues nga Qendra UET, si organizata zbatuese e projektit, por dhe përfaqësues nga Fondacioni ABC, apo institucione të tjera partnere si IRCA dhe UET. Ajo që duhet theksuar është diferenca midis dy Fokus Grupeve. Qëllimisht ishin përzgjedhur dy grupe të komunitetit Rom me tipare thellësisht të dallueshme nga njëri-tjetri. Në Fokus Grupin e parë të pranishëm ishin anëtarët aktiv të këtij komuniteti, ndërsa në takimin e dytë, biseda u zhvillua me pjesën më të skajuar të tyre. Kjo përzgjedhje e qëllimëshme u realizua për të parë jo vetëm perceptimet dhe nevojat që shfaqin Romët aktiv, por dhe pjesa tjetër, mundësitë e së cilës, përgjithësisht, janë më të pakta për t’u përfshirë në forma të tilla integruese. Ky konstatim u vërtetua gjatë zhvillit të Fokus Grupit të dytë, ku ata vetë pohuan se ishte hera e parë që merrnin pjesë në një organizim të tillë. Pozitive, mund të konsiderohet fakti se një pjesë e tyre, pasi u njohën me projektin shfaqën interes të lartë, për t’u përfshirë në projekt dhe për t’u bërë pjesë aktive e formave të ndryshme organizative që krijojnë anëtarët aktiv të komunitetit Rom. Ky Fokus Grup, shërbeu dhe si hapi i parë për krijimin e një rrjeti më të gjerë mes komunitetit.

Çështjet kryesore që u ngritën për diskutim, me të dy Fokus Grupet, lidheshim kryesisht me problematikën e medias massive në lidhje me komunitetin Rom, përdorimin e mediave të reja apo alternative nga ky komunitet si dhe mbi gjetjen e mënyrave më efikase, të cilat mund të ofrojnë zgjidhje për çështjet problematike të këtij komuniteti.

Pas analizimit të të dhënave që n’a ofruan të dy fokus grupet u evidenua se komuniteti Rom ka hasur disa problematika në lidhje me median massive në Shqipëri. Sipas tyre këto problematika konsistojnë në:

Komuniteti Rom zë një hapësirë shumë të vogël në këto media, pra ka mospërfaqësim të tyre në një shkallë të gjerë;

Mungesa e rolit aktiv të mediave për të pasqyruar vlerat, kulturën apo gjuhën e komunitetit;

Lajmet që shfaqen për këtë Komunitet janë përgjithësisht me ngjyime negative;

Mungesa e frymës së multikulturalizmit te gazetarët, kjo i bën të panjohur me çështjet e Romëve

Mediat janë paragjyquese;

Mos trajtimi nga media i çështjes Rome si pjesë integrale e shoqërisë, por si një pjesë e izoluar e saj;

Në median shqipëtare mungon analiza.

Gjatë diskutimit një hapësirë tjetër zuri dhe evidentimi i formave të reja të komunikimit që ofrohen sot, siç janë mediat e reja ose alternative. Këto median përdoren gjerësisht dhe nga komuniteti Rom, si një mundësi e mirë për të lidhur ura komunikimi dhe për të realizuar disa nga objektivat e tyre. Tiparet kryesore të këtyre mediave vijojnë si më poshtë:

Përdorimi i tyre si mundësia më e mirë për t'u informuar dhe për t'ju kundërvënë izolimit mediatik që ofrojnë mediat e mëdha;

Media alternative si mundësi për prodhimin e produkteve mediatike nga vetë komuniteti Rom;

Media alternative për të shpërndarë lehtësisht lajmin që ata duan t'a ndajnë dhe me pjesën tjetër të shoqërisë;

Mediave alternative si mundësi për të rritur dhe zhvilluar më tej aktivitetet e ndërmarra nga Komuniteti Rom pa kosto (Si forma që shërben për të shpërndarë lajmin, në rastin e Romëve që kanë ngritur një aktivitet privat dhe dëshirojnë t'a ngrenë në nivele më të larta punën e tyre).

Por, krahas evidentimit të problematikave që shfaq media massive në Shqipëri dhe rolin që kanë filluar të luajnë mediat e reja alternative, gjatë diskutimit u hodhën dhe disa ide në lidhje me zgjidhjen e kësaj situatë duke përdorur jo vetëm median massive, por kryesisht mediat e reja: Dimensionet që japin për zgjidhje sipas komunitetit Rom, si më poshtë:

Realizimi i një lajmi tërheqës mbi komunitetin Rom, përputhja e tij me trendet e ditës;

Romët të diskutojnë për çështje që prekin të gjithë shoqërinë Shqipëtare si pjesë integrale e shoqërisë dhe jo si pakicë dhe këto diskutime duhet t'i shfaqin në median që ata kanë më tepër akses, siç është media alternative;

Duke qënë se media është dhe një institucion biznesi, atëherë lajmet që ofrojnë duhet të jenë dhe sensacionale, por lajme me ngjyime pozitive, në këtë mënyrë do të kenë dhe interesin e medias, por dhe të pjesës tjetër të shoqërisë;

Zhvillimi i praktikave për të krijuar një rrejt me gazetarë, në mënyrë që të jenë më prezent në emisionet e tyre televizive;

Pasqyrimi i eventeve të tyre nëpërmjet rubrikave të posaçme në median e shkruar;

Krijimi i fushave të advokimit online;

Krijimi dhe ngritja e një Radio nga Komuniteti Rom si mundësia më e mirë për t'u informuar dhe ajo pjesë e komunitetit që nuk ka akses në internet;

Ndërthurja e marrjes së informacionit online me median tradicionale, siç është printimi dhe shpërndarja, si forma që vjen në përputhje me nevojat dhe karakteristikat që ka grupi tek i cili po adreson lajmet.

Këto ishin disa nga gjetjet kryesore që u konsatuan nga diskutimi midis anëtarëve të komunitetit Rom, të dhëna që do të shërbejnë për fazën e dytë të projektit, në të cilën parashikohet realizimi i një tryeze të rrumbullakët me temë "T'i kundërvihesh skajimit mediatik të komunitetit Rom përmes mediave alternative", ku do të diskutohet më specifikisht mbi këto çështje.

ANNEX V – Review Radio Kanxura

RADIO Kanxura

Përshkrim.

Radio Online.

Promovimi i Shkëmbimit Ndërkulturor Ndërmjet të Rinjve.

Edukimi dhe Këshillim për të drejtat dhe detyrimet qytetare.

Krijimi i një forumi dialogu dhe diskutimi për çështje Konkrete.

Kanxura?

Pse zgjodhëm të vendosim këtë emer, lidhet me natyrën e Radios, programacionit që do shoqërojë hapësirat Radiofonike. Nuk bëhet fjalë për një program të vakët, por një format argëtues dhe dinamik, i gërshtuar me humor dhe argëtim e cila sipas opinionit tonë do ta bënte me të këndshme për audience.

Bëhet fjalë për një Radio Rinore, dhe frymë që do të krijojë është sa edukative aq edhe zbavitëse.

Hapësira Radiofonike?

Muzikë Tradicionale Rome.

Promovim i vlerave të muzikës tradicionale Rome, të artistëve Rom në mbarë botën. Prezantim i gjinive më pak të njohura dhe të lëvruara nga masa e gjerë.

Elementë Rome.

Elemente nga kultura Rome vijnë të gjalla përmes interpretimes nga vullnetarë të Korpusit Rom të Vullnetareve, në formën e Podcasteve.

ACH.

Ka si qëllim të krijojë një mjedis të larmishëm kulturor.

Të trajtojë tematike të caktuara nga realiteti duke i veshur një vel humori.

Ndryshimet që duam të sjellim?!

Prezantimin e Modeleve të caktuara dhe krijimin e një frymë e cila do të mund të ndikonte në edukimin e bashkëmoshatarëve të tjerë, drejt rrugës së zhvillimit sipas interesave dhe nevojave. Integrimin e një komuniteti më gjerë.

Edukimi dhe këshillim karriere, përmes programesh Radio për të rinjtë Rom, do të kontribuonte në aftësimin për të shfrytëzuar të drejtat dhe detyrimet si qytetarë të barabartë drejt integritetit në shoqëri.

Fuqizimi i identitetit të komunitetit Rom, do drejtojë drejt pranimi dhe barazisë në shoqëri.

-FUQIZIMI I TE RINJVE PERMES MEDIAS ALTERNATIVE-

Cikli i trajnimeve nga projekti: *“Fuqizimi i të rinjve Rome përmes medias alternative”*, mbështetur nga fondacioni A.B.C dhe zbatuar nga Instituti i Kulturës Rome në Shqipëri në bashkëpunim me Qendrën UET.

Përvecse një eksperiencë e vlefshme e cila preku pritshmëritë e mia personale, pati dhe një ndikim në motivimin për të bërë dhe zhvilluar kanalet e komunikimit përmes medias alternative, dhe këtë gjë na e përcolli mësë miri sesioni: “Bëj Median tënde”.

Pergatiti Xhenson Cela

Instituti i Kulturës Rome në Shqipëri.

ANNEX VI – Data on the online videos produced as media materials by Roma communities

Data on the online videos on Roma communities in Albania produced as media materials by Roma (Period August 2012 - June 2016)				
Nr	Titulli i Materialit	Data	Link	Numri i Klikimeve
1	Na njihni pastaj na paragjykon, Emisioni 37	30.08.2012	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6GdRnMNStAs	348
2	Panairi Romët-30 prill	19.5.2013	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7D6ZdsA_BCI	205
3	Kampi Veror	2.07.2013	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m7Ge8g2_mEE	187
4	Arben Kosturi, Instruktori i Gjuhës Rome	29.08.2013	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TqDtrujxWW0	232
5	Vlerat e Minoritetit Rom	16.12.2013	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mx-yWHYpUvk	259
6	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 15	24.04.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gt20ZsvHpms	1064
7	Organizatat Rome në Korçë	29.04.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EZBk7RYnPo0&feature=	396
8	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 18	20.05.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-x4f-5Sb_TU	402
9	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 24 Karnavalet 2014	09.06.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtbyB-BtBqls	350
10	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 21- Erdelezi	13.6.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cMt_xZhVwKI	1,468
11	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 28-Strehimi-2	14.08.2014	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSyBWGRU2YM	393
12	Emisioni Shqip-Rromisht "Bashkëjetesë dhe Integrim" 33 Diskriminimi	31.01.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEJ7V2U5t6s	481

13	Arsimi 9 Vjeçar	22.03.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d4bdVMI1Kzg	191
14	Arsimi i Lartë, Roma Versitas Albania	26.03.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9moqTLwZPSg	158
15	Aktivitetet e Organizatave Rome	20.04.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S27xaQptIBM	90
16	Roma Versitas Albania	04.05.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GLiDJvbdEfk	188
17	Bashkëjetesa me Maxhorancën	18.05.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bj-KfNzfcco	46
18	Strehimi	18.05.2016	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hfZBRwBjSSw	71
19	Historiku i Komunitetit Rom	18.05.2017	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XBH0gxkk9wU	148
20	Martestat	18.05.2018	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nx6R2DzVMtA	500
21	Fuqizimi i Gruas Rome	18.05.2019	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiouBFcLOCA	186
22	Grumbullimi i Mbetjeve	18.05.2020	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qfK2QjeLb0	169
23	Takimi Rom me Zyrën e Diskriminimit në Tiranë	19.05.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpG-B_mNHps	243
24	Punësimi dhe Aftësimi i Kurseve Profesionale	07.06.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkteWmtMzCc	240
25	Spoti i Fëmijëve Rom	26.09.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rOE_1aFkQI	193
26	Samiti i mbajtur në Budapest	08.10.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Sn71SrY4dU	229
27	Konferenca e Shkollës Naim Frashëri Tiranë	21.12.2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Fn5JIMfStI	59
28	Strehimi Rom, Korçë	4.01.2016	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AMzc7TFG-hY	55
29	"Emisioni" Amaro Drom, Skënder Velu	13.01.2016	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZIUfU6_ZzU	86
30	Në ambjentet e Roma Versitas Albania "Korce"	17.01.2016	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JrabV5zPaN0	93

ANNEX VII – Data on mainstream media coverage of Roma communities (Aug 2013- Jan 2016)

#	Titulli	Lloji	Media	Data	Link
1	Tryezë për romët, AP: Zgjidhje urgjente. Sekui: Një nga 12 prioritetet për integrimin	Lajm Shtyp	Panorama	13 Gusht 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/tryeze-per-romet-ap-zgjidhje-urgjente/
2	Romët, të harruar mes nesh	Lajm Social	Panorama	12 Gusht 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/romet-te-harruar-mes-nesh/
3	Vdekja e foshnjës, Totozani: Romët, në kushte çnjerëzore	Lajm Social	Panorama	11 Mars 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/vdekja-e-foshnjes-totozani-romet-ne-kushte-cnjerëzore/
4	DË: Romët në Shqipëri, një komunitet i lënë në harresë të plotë	Lajm social	Shqiptarja.com	10 Gusht 2013	http://shqiptarja.com/media/2710/dw-romet-ne-shqiperi-nje-komunitet-i-lene-ne-harrese-te-plote-171269.html
5	Vrasjet e romëve në Hungari: Zbulime të reja, kompensim i vonuar	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	27 Gusht 2013	http://www.dw.com/sq/vrasjet-e-rom%C3%ABve-n%C3%AB-hungari-zbulime-t%C3%AB-reja-kompensim-i-vonuar/a-17045958
6	Gjirokastër, një lagje rome pa ujë	Lajm TV - Social	Top Channel	9 Korrik 2013	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7Lp3OLuqHA
7	"Komuniteti rom më i marginalizuari në Shqipëri!"	Focus – Report	Deutchwelle	27 Shtator 2013	http://www.dw.com/sq/komuniteti-rom-m%C3%AB-i-margjinalizuari-n%C3%AB-shqip%C3%ABri/a-17118264
8	Pjesëmarrje e mangët e romëve në politikë	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	25 Shtator 2013	http://www.dw.com/sq/pjes%C3%ABmarrje-e-mang%C3%ABt-e-rom%C3%ABve-n%C3%AB-politik%C3%AB/a-17113992
9	AP, paketë rekomandimesh ministrive për romët	Lajm Politik	Panorama	28 Tetor 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/ap-pakete-rekomandimesh-ministrive-per-romet/
10	Dy projekte për romët e egjiptianët	Lajm Social	Panorama	23 Gusht 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/dy-projekte-per-romet-e-egjiptianet/
11	Romët, AP: Ndërhyrje në legjislacion për regjistrimin, ndihmën ekonomike, strehimin	Lajm Politik	Panorama	20 Gusht 2013	http://www.panorama.com.al/ceshtja-e-romeve-ap-nderhyrje-ne-legjislacion-regjistrimin-ndihmen-ekonomike-dhe-programet-e-strehimit/

12	8 Prilli, Dita Ndërkombëtare e romëve, bashkë për një shoqëri më të mirë	Lajm Social	Gazeta Shekulli	8 Prill 2013	http://www.shekulli.com.al/p.php?id=20621
13	Romët në Tiranë	Lajm TV - Social	VOA	11 Gusht 2013	http://www.zeriamerikes.com/content/article/1727694.html
14	Komuniteti rom ne Shqipëri	Lajme TV - Social	VOA	21 Korrik 2013	http://www.zeriamerikes.com/media/video/1706203.html
15	Komuniteti rom i përjashtuar ngajeta social-kulturore në Shqipëri	Lajm shtyp	Shqiptarja.com	30 Nëntor 2014	https://shqiptarja.com/news.php?IDNotizia=256117
16	Komuniteti rom, që ndryshoi Festivalin e Beratit	Lajm Social	Panorama	25 Gusht 2014	http://www.panorama.com.al/komuniteti-rom-qe-ndryshoi-festivalin-e-beratit/
17	Ndërprerja e energjisë për debitorët, komuniteti rom në Berat proteston	Lajm Social	Gazeta Tema	4 Nëntor 2014	http://www.gazetatema.net/web/2014/11/04/nderprerja-e-energjisë-per-debitorët-komuniteti-rom-ne-berat-proteston/
18	Pazare me romët për azilin	Lajm TV - Social	VizionPlus	2014	http://vizionplus.al/pazare-me-romet-per-azilin/
19	Sistemimi i komunitetit rom	Lajm TV - Social	VizionPlus	2014	http://vizionplus.al/sistemimi-i-komunitetit-rom/
20	Diskriminimi i romëve në Fier	Lajm TV - Social	VizionPlus	2014	http://vizionplus.al/diskriminimi-i-romeve-ne-fier/
21	Elbasan, digjen nënë e bir	Lajm TV	VizionPlus	2014	http://vizionplus.al/elbasan-digjen-nene-e-bir/
22	Ekspertët e KE: Pesë rekomandime për romët	Politik - Social	Panorama	4 Nëntor 2014	http://www.panorama.com.al/ekspertet-e-ke-pese-rekomandime-per-romet/
23	Studimi i ri mbi romët në Shqipëri: Të përjashtuar nga jeta social-kulturore	Lajm Social	Ora Neës	1 Dhjetor 2014	http://www.oranews.tv/vendi/studimi-i-ri-mbi-romet-ne-shqiperi-te-perjashtuar-nga-jeta-social-kulturore/

24	Vasili: Zgjidhje për romët. Vendimi për SHQUP, i gabuar. Administrata? Spastrimi, jo filozofi e jona	Lajm Politik	Panorama	14 Gusht 2014	http://www.panorama.com.al/lsi-vasili-duhet-zgjidhje-per-romet/
25	Diskriminimi i lë nxënësit romë jashtë shkollës në Shqipëri	Lajm Social	Koha Jonë	24 Janar 2014	http://www.kohajone.com/2015/01/24/diskriminimi-i-le-nxenesit-rome-jashte-shkolles-ne-shqiperi/
26	Studim- Komuniteti rom dhe egjiptian, ende shumë pengesa në përfshirjen sociale	Lajm Soccial	Agjencia Telegrafike Shqiptare	10 Nëntor 2015	http://www.ata.gov.al/studim-komuniteti-rom-dhe-egjiptian-ende-shume-pengesa-ne-perfshirjen-sociale-337603.html
27	Deutsche Ëelle transmeton në gjuhën rome	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	4 Gusht 2010	http://www.dw.com/sq/deutsche-welle-transmeton-n%C3%AB-gjuh%C3%ABn-rome/a-5439313
28	BE dhe romët - Intervistë me Michele Cercone	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	10 Gusht 2010	http://www.dw.com/sq/be-dhe-rom%C3%ABt-intervist%C3%AB-me-michele-cercone/a-5883429
29	'Na njihni, pastaj na paragjykoni!'	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	23 Tetor 2012	http://www.dw.com/sq/na-njihni-pastaj-na-paragjykoni/a-16188490
30	"Kënga është jeta ime!" - Esma Rexhepova, simboli i muzikës rome	Fokus - Report	Deutchwelle	4 Gusht 2010	http://www.dw.com/sq/k%C3%ABnga-%C3%ABsht%C3%AB-jeta-ime-esma-rexhepova-simboli-i-muzik%C3%ABs-rome/a-5454738
31	Debati për romët	Lajm Social	Gazeta Shekulli	8 Prill 2015	http://www.shekulli.com.al/p.php?id=239319
32	Komuniteti rom, BE dhe PNUD financim prej 1.6 mln eurosh	Lajm shtyp	Gazeta Shqiptare	06 Korrik 2015	http://www.balkanweb.com/gazetashqiptare/komuniteti-rom-be-dhe-pnud-financim-prej-1-6-mln-eurosh/
33	NE, EGJIPTIANËT DHE ROMËT E SHQIPËRISË	Lajm Social	Gazeta Shqiptare	9 Qershor 2015	http://www.balkanweb.com/gazetashqiptare/ne-egjiptianet-dhe-romet-e-shqiperise/
34	Radio 'Kaxura', të rinjtë rom i kundërvihen skajimit mediatik	Lajm Social	MAPO	2 Qershor 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/06/radio-kanxura-te-rinjte-rom-i-kundervihen-skajimit-mediatik

35	Mbyllet mbledhja e Këshillit Bashkiak, të djathtët kërkuan Veliajn në interpelancë për romët	Lajm Politik	Panorama	21 Tetor 2015	http://www.panorama.com.al/mbyllet-mbledhja-e-keshillit-bashkiak-te-djathtet-kerkuan-veliajn-ne-interpelance-per-romet/
36	Romët dhe egjiptianët e Lezhës drejt Gjermanisë, kreu i shoqatës: I hoqën nga ndihma ekonomike e i lanë në terr	Lajm Social	Panorama	27 Prill 2015	http://www.panorama.com.al/romet-dhe-egjiptianet-e-lezhes-drejt-gjermanise-kreu-i-shoqates-i-hoqen-nga-ndihma-ekonomike-e-i-lane-ne-terr/
37	PD: Komuniteti rom në kushte dramatike	Lajm politik	Shekulli	24 Nëntor 2015	http://www.shekulli.com.al/p.php?id=353762
38	“Komuniteti rom”, nga Etelina Nikolla	Lajm TV - Social	Channel One	14 Tetor 2015	http://www.channel-one.al/komuniteti-rom-nga-etelina-nikolla/
39	Tiranë, vdes nga i ftohti foshnja 3 muajshe. Totozani: E turpshme për shtetin	Social - Politik	Gazeta Shqip	28 Dhjetor 2015	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2015/12/28/tirane-vdes-nga-i-ftohti-foshnja-3-muajshe-totozani-e-turpshme-per-shtetin/
40	Inaugurohet Qendra Tranzitore e Emergjencave, Klosi: Janë sistemuar 170 romë	Lajm Politik	Gazeta Shqip	13 Korrik 2015	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2015/07/13/inaugurohet-qendra-tranzitore-e-emergjencave-klosi-jane-sistemuar-170-rome/
41	Komuniteti rom: Fëmijët po preken nga zgjedhja, të merren masa	Lajm Social	Gazeta Shqip	6 Korrik 2015	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2015/07/06/komuniteti-rom-femijet-po-preken-nga-zgjedhja-te-merren-masa/
42	Festat e fundvitit. Komuniteti rom, i braktisur nga bashkia e Durrësit	Lajme TV	Channel One	26 Dhjetor 2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1VC-j6qvS4
43	Komuniteti Rom kërkon rritjen e të ardhurave në buxhet për shtresat në nevojë	Lajme TV - Social	Ora News	24 Nëntor 2015	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5yDbWSapP9g
44	Për herë të parë komuniteti rom,	Social - Politik	Koha Jonë	21 Nëntor	http://www.kohajone.com/2015/11/21/per-here-te-pare-komuniteti-rom-abetare-ne-gjuhen-e-tyre/

	abetare në gjuhën e tyre			2015	
45	Komuniteti rom në Tiranë, Institucionet na kanë braktisur, kandidatët për kryebashkiak të dëgjojnë dhe hallet tona	Lajme TV - Social	ABC News	12 Qershor 2015	http://www.abcnews.al/lajme/aktualitet/2/57490
46	Komuniteti Rom, i kërkon qeverisë rritjen e të ardhurave për këtë kategori	Lajm Social	Gazeta Telegraf	24 Nëntor 2015	http://telegraf.al/aktualitet/komuniteti-rom-i-kerkon-qeverise-rritjen-e-te-ardhurave-per-kete-kategori
47	Komuniteti rom dhe egjiptian, 5600 firma për të kërkuar strehim	Lajm Social	Historia Ime	25 Nëntor 2015	http://historia-ime.com/2015/11/25/komuniteti-rom-dhe-egjiptian-5600-firma-per-te-kerkuar-strehim/
48	Raporti, “Të rinjtë në veprim”: Fëmijët rom të diskriminuar në nivel institucional	Lajm TV - Social	OraNews	20 Maj 2015	http://www.oranews.tv/vendi/te-rinjte-ne-veprim-femijet-rom-te-perjashtuar-e-te-diskriminuar-ne-nivel-institucional/
49	Korçë, romët dhe egjiptianët në një shkollë	Lajm TV - Social	Top Channel	12 Nëntor 2015	http://top-channel.tv/lajme/artikull.php?id=312912&ref=ngj
50	Dhuna seksuale ndaj fëmijëve	Politik - Social	VizionPlus	2015	http://vizionplus.al/dhuna-seksuale-ndaj-femijeve/
51	Lezhë, protestë për energjinë	Lajm TV - Social	VizionPlus	2015	http://vizionplus.al/lezhe-proteste-per-energjine/
52	Dita ndërkombëtare e romëve	Lajm TV - Social	VizionPlus	2015	http://vizionplus.al/dita-nderkombetare-e-romeve-2/
53	Lezhë, romët protestë ndaj OSHEE	Lajm Politik	VizionPlus	2015	http://vizionplus.al/lezhe-romet-proteste-ndaj-oshee/
54	Kosova takime me romët	Lajm Politik	VizionPlus	2015	http://vizionplus.al/kosova-takime-me-romet/
55	Zhvendosen romët, ja si do të transformohet Parku i Tiranës	Lajm Politik	MAPO	15 Tetor 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/10/fotot-bashkia-zhvendos-romet-ja-si-do-te-trasformohet-parku-i-tiranes

56	Romët te liqeni akuzojnë policinë për kërcënime	Lajm Politik	MAPO	7 Tetor 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/10/romet-te-liqeni-akuzojne-policine-per-kercenime
57	Romët te Liqeni, Avokati i Popullit: Bashkia të shmangë zhvendosjen me forcë	Lajm Politik	MAPO	6 Tetor 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/10/romet-te-liqeni-avokati-i-popullit-bashkia-te-shmange-zhvendosjen-me-force
58	“Zhvendosni romët nga Liqeni Artificial”	Lajm Politik - Social	MAPO	30 Shtator 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/09/zhvendosni-romet-nga-liqeni-artificial
59	Gulaku komunist i Savrës shndërrohet në geto për romët e varfër	Lajm Social	MAPO	12 Gusht 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/08/gulaku-komunist-i-savres-shnderrohet-ne-geto-per-romet-e-varfer
60	Pazare me romët për azilin	Lajm Social	MAPO	24 Prill 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/04/pazare-me-romet-per-azilin
61	Ofendoj romët, Facebook e pezullon 24 orë	Lajm Social	MAPO	9 Prill 2015	http://www.mapo.al/2015/04/ofendoj-romet-facebook-e-pezullon-24-ore
62	Djegia e barakave ,Komuniteti rom kalon natën në qiell të hapur, Bashkia do të ofrojë kontinierë	Lajm TV - Social	Ora News	29 Janar 2016	http://www.oranews.tv/vendi/komuniteti-rom-kalon-naten-ne-qiell-te-hapur-bashkia-do-te-ofroje-kontiniere/
63	Romët në Shkozë përleshën me policinë, pasi i'u dogjën barakat	Lajm Shtyp	MAPO	28 Janar 2016	http://www.mapo.al/2016/01/video-romet-ne-shkoze-perleshen-me-policine-pasi-iu-dogjen-barakat
64	Romët dhe radikalët: baza e dyshuar bullgare që mbështet ISIS	Lajm Shtyp	MAPO	11 Janar 2016	http://www.mapo.al/2016/01/romet-dhe-radikalet-baza-e-dyshuar-bullgare-qe-mbeshtet-isis
65	Romët nën kërcënimin e motit: Po na vdesin fëmijët	Lajm TV - Social	Top Channel	12 Janar 2016	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XV3fBmxbusM
66	PD për vdekjen e foshnjës	Lajm Politik	VizionPlus	2016	http://vizionplus.al/pd-per-vdekjen-e-foshnjes/
67	Digjen barakat e romëve	Lajm Politik	VizionPlus	2016	http://vizionplus.al/digjen-barakat-e-romeve/
68	Romët me sytë nga Gjermania	Lajm Social	VizionPlus	2016	http://vizionplus.al/romet-me-syte-nga-gjermania/

69	Pas përmytjeve, Komuniteti rom apel Qeverisë: Na jepni ca tokë të ndërtojmë barakat larg lumit	Lajm social	Bota Sot	9 Janar 2016	http://botasot.info/shqiperia/501350/pas-permytjeve-komuniteti-rom-apel-qeverise-na-jepni-ca-toke-te-ndertojme-barakat-larg-lumit/
70	Komuniteti rom protesta para OSHEE, i kanë lënë pa energji prej muajsh		Syri	19 Janar 2016	http://www.syri.net/2016/01/19/komuniteti-rom-protesta-para-oshee-i-kane-lene-pa-energji-prej-muajsh-foto/
71	Digjen kasollet e romëve në Tiranë, shpëtojnë banorët	Lajm Shtyp	Lajme.al	28 Janar 2016	http://www.lajme.al/tag/komuniteti-rom/
72	Komuniteti rom kalon natën në qiell të hapur, bashkia do të ofrojë kontinierë	Lajm Social	TiranaObserver	29 Janar 2016	http://www.tiranaobserver.al/komuniteti-rom-kalon-naten-ne-qiell-te-hapur-bashkia-do-te-ofroje-kontiniere/
73	Detajet / Ja si i vidhte paratë për romët dhe fëmijët në nevojë Spiro Ksera	Lajm Shtyp	Gazeta Tema	30 Janar 2016	http://www.gazetatema.net/web/2016/01/30/detajet-ja-si-i-vidhte-parate-per-romet-dhe-femijet-ne-nevoje-spiro-ksera/
74	Spiro Ksera vodhi para nga të rinjtë, të moshuarit dhe romët	Lajm Shtyp	Gazeta Shqip	31 Janar 2016	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2016/01/31/spiro-ksera-vodhi-para-nga-te-rinjte-te-moshuarit-dhe-romet/
75	Romët përplasen me Ollin në protestë: Po bëni politikë me vdekjet.	Lajm Shtyp	Panorama	28 Janar 2016	http://www.panorama.com.al/video-romet-perplasen-me-ollin-ne-proteste-po-beni-politike-me-vdekjet/
76	Djegia e barakave, komuniteti rom kalon natën në qiell të hapur	Lajm Social	Ekspres.al	29 Janar 2016	http://www.ekspres.al/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=33948:2016-01-29-10-29-56&catid=112:lajme-kryes

ANNEX VIII – Data on media projects in Albania (2012-2016)

#	Titulli	Institucion i	Lloji	Data	Link	Qëllimi/Rezultati
1	Freedom of Media Report	SEENPM	Raport	2012	http://www.seenpm.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/SEENPM_Media_freedom_report_final.pdf	Raportim I lirisë së medias në vendet e Ballkanit
2	The Charlie Hebdo Effect in the Balkans	Media Diversity Insitute	Studim	14/06/2014	http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2976:the-study-on-charlie-hebdo-effect-in-the-balkans&catid=30:studiesreportspublications&Itemid=37	Pasqyron sesi u raportuan sulmet terroriste të Francës në Ballkan.
3	Fresh Battles Ahead as Balkan Media Struggle with Online Hate	Media Diversity Insitute	Artikull	24/0/2013	http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2638:fresh-battles-ahead-as-balkan-media-struggle-with-online-hate-&catid=112:latestnews&Itemid=22	Analizë e gjuhës së urrejtjes në Shqipëri
4	Changing Faces of Religion and Religion Journalists	Media Diversity Insitute	Artikull	26/9/2014	http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2844:changing-faces-of-religion-and-religion-journalists&catid=112:latestnews&Itemid=22	Analizë e raportimeve mbi fenë
5	Media Diversity Insitute	Portal	Institut		http://www.media-diversity.org/en/	Promovim I raportimeve gjithëpërfshirëse dhe koherente
6	Western balkans and Turkey. Media and freedom of expression fact-finding and scoping study	European Commission	Raport	Apr-13	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/Western-balkans-and-Turkey.-Media-and-freedom-of-expression-fact-finding-and-scoping-study	Promovim I raportimeve gjithëpërfshirëse dhe koherente

7	Employment conditions of journalists in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro	SEEPMD	Raport rajonal	Jun-15	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/Employment-conditions-of-journalists-in-Albania-Bosnia-Herzegovina-Macedonia-Montenegro	Analizë e kushteve të punësimit të gazetarëve
8	Reporting neighbours in Balkan media	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Studim	Jul-15	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/Reporting-neighbours-in-Balkan-media	Pasqyrim I stereotipizimit që I bëhet imazhit të fqinjve në media
9	Media integrity matters. Reclaiming public service values in media and journalism	Peace Institute	Studim	Jun-14	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Books/Media-integrity-matters.-Reclaiming-public-service-values-in-media-and-journalism	Analizë e pengesave ndaj demokracisë në media
10	European Western Balkans: 2015 World Press Freedom Index	European Eastern Balkans	Grafik Krahasues	2015	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Multi-media/Infographics/European-Western-Balkans-2015-World-Press-Freedom-Index	Krahasim I rezultateve nga raportimet e RëB 2015
11	A needs assessment of the media councils in South East Europe	UNESCO	Studim	Jun-15	http://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Publications/Reports/A-needs-assessment-of-the-media-councils-in-South-East-Europe	Analizë krahasimore e këshillave të mediave në EJT
12	Media in South East Europe: The Struggle for Success on the Web Media Business Today Competition, Ownership, Old and New Media	South East Europe Media Forum	Forum	11/05/15	http://www.seemo.org/South-East-Europe-Media-Forum-opens-in-Bucharest.html	Forum mediatik
13	Gjuha e urrejtjes në media shqetëson grupet e marginalizuara në Shqipëri	Reporter.al	Artikull	21/12/2015	http://www.reporter.al/gjuha-e-urrejtjes-ne-media-shqeteson-grupet-e-margjinalizuara-ne-shqiperi/	Vlerësimi i etikës në median shqiptare

14	Projektligji për mediat online hap debatin mbi lirinë e shprehjes në Shqipëri	Reporter.al	Artikull	22/4/2015	http://www.reporter.al/projektligji-per-mediat-online-hap-debatin-mbi-lirine-e-shprehjes-ne-shqiperi/	Reportazh
15	Reklamuesit e mëdhenj shkatërrojnë lirinë e medias në Shqipëri	Reporter.al	Artikull	20/12/2013	http://www.reporter.al/reklamuesit-e-medhenj-shkaterrojne-lirine-e-medias-ne-shqiperi/	Reportazh
16	COMMUNICATION PRACTICES IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL UPRISINGS AND REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Projekt	n/a	http://www.institutemedia.org/projects.html	n/a
17	STRENGTHENING THE REPRESENTATION AND PORTRAYAL OF WOMEN IN THE ALBANIAN MEDIA	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Projekt	n/a	http://www.institutemedia.org/projects.html	n/a
18	IMPROVING MEDIA FREEDOM AND MEDIA PROFESSIONALISM IN ALBANIAN MEDIA	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Projekt	n/a	http://www.institutemedia.org/projects.html	n/a
19	Hate speech in online media in SEE	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Publikim	n/a	http://www.institutemedia.org/publications.html	n/a
20	Balkan Media Barometer	Instituti Shqiptar I Medias	Publikim	2013	http://www.institutemedia.org/publications.html	n/a
21	The online media in Albania	Instituti Shqiptar I	Publikim	n/a	http://www.institutemedia.org/publications.html	n/a

		Medias				
22	Di chi sono i media albanesi?	Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso	Artikull	18/03/2013	http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Albania/Di-chi-sono-i-media-albanesi-131618	Analizë e lirisë së medias
23	Giornalismo in Albania: scoop, politica ed autocensura	Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso	Artikull	15/4/2011	http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Albania/Giornalismo-in-Albania-scoop-politica-ed-autocensura-92220	Analizë e lirisë së medias
24	I media in Albania	Osservatorio Balcani e Caucaso	Artikull	08/02/02	http://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Albania/I-media-in-Albania-21230	Analizë e përgjithshme
25	In Depth: Balkan Media Losing The Battle With Tabloidisation?	Balkan Insight	Artikull	06/08/10	http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/in-depth-balkan-media-losing-the-battle-with-tabloidisation	Analizë e medias së printuar vs. asaj online
26	Disunity and Poverty Erode Albanian Media Freedoms	Balkan Insight	Artikull	17/6/2013	http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/disunity-and-poverty-erode-albanian-media-freedoms	Analizë e lirisë së medias
27	Albanian Media 'Struggles with Corruption Reporting'	Balkan Insight	Artikull	20/4/2015	http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/albanian-s-media-struggles-in-its-reporting-of-corruption	Analizë e lirisë së medias gjatë raportimit për korrupsionin në vend
28	Media Freedom in Albania	KAS	Analizë	2015	http://www.kas.de/wf/en/71.13549/	Analizë e lirisë së medias
29	Building Media Systems in the Western Balkans Lost between Models and Realities	RRPP	Studim	2013	http://www.analitika.ba/sites/default/files/publikacije/voltmer_k_-_rrpp_building_media_-_wp10_-_3dec2013_final_for_publishing.pdf	Analizë

30	Governments' Uses and Misuses of Freedom of Information Laws in Emerging European Democracies: FOI Laws' Impact on News Agenda-Building in Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro	SAGE journals	Studim	23/10/2015	http://jmq.sagepub.com/content/early/2015/10/23/1077699015610073.full.pdf+html	Analizë
31	Media in the New Democracies of Post-Communist Eastern Europe	SAGE journals	Studim	May-15	http://eep.sagepub.com/content/29/2/453.full.pdf+html	Analizë
32	Media Transformation and Colective Memory in Albania	IDMC	Përmbledhje papers të prezantuar në konferencë	9-10/11/2015	https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8L2HNXvoFmsRHVxZFdTC1jMFk/view	Përmbledhje papers të prezantuar në konferencë

ANNEX IX – Data on media materials produced by Roma communities through Kanxura Radio

#	Titulli i materialit mediatik	Lloji i materialit mediatik	Link	Data	Përmbajtja
1	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/mediatori-permes-medias-online?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook		Materiali radiofonik gjate prezantimit te Medias Online dhe rolit qe mund te luaje ne procesin e advokimit per Mediatorin ne Komunitet.
2	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/mediatori-permes-medias-online?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	3 Shkurt 2016	Ky podcast prezanton sesionin e fundit të trajnimit, ku mediatorët mesuan ne hapa praktike komunikimin me anë të medias online, si një risi për advokimin.
3	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/mesazhe-per-vullnetarizmin?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	9 Dhjetor 2015	Ky podcast eshte realizuar ne kuader te dites se vullnetarizmit 5 Dhjetor 2015. Vanesa, Inva, Danjel, Moku, Klaudio, Rora, Brisilda dhe zv. Ministria e Arsimit Znj. Nora Malaj kane ndare per Kanxura Radio mesazhe per te inspiruar vullnetarizmin rinor .
4	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/barvalipe-school?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	1 Dhjetor 2015	Shkolla Barvalipe ne Shqiperi organizon ceremonine permbyllese, ku ndane eksperiencat me te mira si dhe u promovuan te rinjte pjesemarres. Aktiviteti u shoqerua me muzike e fjalime nga organizatoret ne nje atmosfere mjaft te ngrohite dhe miqesore.
5	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/klubi-i-gjuhes-rome?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	26 Nentor 2015	Interviste me drejtuesen e Klubit te Gjuhes Rome Klaudio Hamiti e cila prezanton qellimin e ketij klubi.

6	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/together-against-fascism-and-antisemitism-9-november-an-international-day?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	13 Nentor 2015	Linku i paaksesueshem9 Nentor - Dita kunder fashizmit dhe anti-semitizmit
7	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/dita-nderkombetare-kunder-fashizmit-dhe-antisemitizmit?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	9 Nentor 2015	9 Nentori dita Nderkombetare kunder Fashizmit dhe Antisemitizmit
8	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/interviste-me-flutura-ramaj-praktikante-ne-shkollen-bakushe-visha-fushekruje?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	7 Nentor 2015	Kjo intervistë i dedikohet inisiativës: “Të mbështesim shpresën e të rinjëve rom për një të ardhme të përbashkët demokratike”. Inisiativë e mbështetur nga U.S embassy. Studentëve i është ofuar mundësia të kryjnë praktika profesionale pranë institucioneve ku mund të zhvillohen në planin praktik.
9	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/interviste-me-keli-hamzaj-nga-keli-haxhiaj-meditator-ne-rroskovec-fier-mixdown?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	24 Tetor 2015	Intervista e përgatitur nga Makelian Haxhiaj, Mediator ne Bashkinë Rroskovec. Intervista është realizuar me një të ri Rom nga Rroskoveci, i cili ndan me ne një mesazh nga përvoja e tij personale.
10	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/vullnetare-nga-berati-vizitojne-irca?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	26 Gusht 2015	Një grup të rinjsh nga qyteti i Beratit, së bashku me Eno Shorin dhe Xhermeni nga Korpusi I Paqes vizituan IRCA'n, për tu njohur me veprimtarinë e një organizateje rinore. Gjithashtu me korpusin rom të vullnetarëve dhe vullnetarizmin në vetvete.

11	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/informacion-per-kandidatet-rom-dhe-egjptian-mbi-kuotat-universitare-per-vitin-akademik-2015-2016?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	25 Gusht 2015	M.A.S ka shpallur udhëzimin për kriteret dhe procedurat e përzgjedhjes dhe regjistrimit për kandidatët me status të vecantë ku përfshihen dhe anëtarë të komunitetit rom dhe egjiptian për vitin akademik 2015-2016.
12	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/interviste-me-z-ferit-milanj-mediator-ne-bashkine-fier?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	21 Gusht 2015	Në këtë podcast do të dëgjoni intervisten e zhvilluar me z. Ferit Milanj, Mediator në Qytetin e Fierit. Do të na flasë pak për rolin e Mediatorit dhe përvojën e tij në këtë drejtim. Z. Milanj gjithashtu ka përvojën si këshilltar pranë Bashkisë Lushnje.
13	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/interviste-me-zpanajot-alushi-mediator-ne-bashkine-fier?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	21 Gusht 2015	Në këtë podcast do të dëgjoni, intervisten e zhvilluar me Panajot Alushin, një nga Mediatorët e Qytetit Fier. Panajoti do ndajë me ne pikëpamjen e tij për mediatorin, dhe përvojën e tij në këtë drejtim.
14	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/rva-summer-camp-interview-with-students?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	17 Gusht 2015	Aktiviteti RVA SUMMER CAMP: NETWORKING TOGETHER, i organizuar në bashkëpunim me Instituti i Kulturës Rome në Shqipëri, në datat 21 & 22 Korrik 2015, në Sektor Rinia Durrës. Kishte si qëllim kryesor rrjetëzimin midis të rinjve rrom dhe jo-rrom, njohjen dhe dialogu midis tyre, ngritjen e bashkëpunimit midis të rinjve. Në këtë podcast do të dëgjoni vetëm intervistat e zhvilluara me dy nga studentet pjesëmarrës. Irena Majko, studente e diplomuar në Psikologji, si dhe Olsi Sherifi, student i gazetarisë.

15	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/rva-summer-camp-networking-together?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	17 Gusht 2015	Ne kete Podcast mund te degjoni nje pjese te pervojave ne kampin veror: "Te rrjetezohemi se bashku"
16	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/roma-versitas-albania-interview-with-emiliano-alio-project-coordinator?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	14 Gusht 2015	Roma Versitas Albania, Interviste me Emiliano Aliu, projekt kordinator i programit në Shqipëri. Në këtë podcast mund të mësoni më shumë rreth programit të Roma Versitas, shumë i dobishëm për studentët.
17	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/sets/intervista-me-mjeshterin?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	10 Gusht 2015	E realizuar ne formen e bashke bisedimit te lire, ne secilin prej podcasteve mund te njiheni me info, detaje dhe opinione nga Kultura, historia, dhe gjuha rome.
18	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/nuk-nxirret-leku-kollaj-jingle?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	28 Korrik 2015	Linku i paaksesueshëm
19	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/intervista-me-mjeshterin-artizan-pj2-promovimi-i-identitetit-dhe-kultures-materiale-rome?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	16 Korrik 2015	Intervista me Mjeshterin Artizan, Zinxhiraj. Gjirokaster. Rrefim i nje pjese te vogel te kultures Materiale. Pjesa e dytë
20	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/intervista-me-mjeshterin-artizan-pji-promovimi-i-identitetit-dhe-kultures-materiale-rome?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	16 Korrik 2015	Intervista me Mjeshterin Artizan, Zinxhiraj. Gjirokaster. Rrefim i nje pjese te vogel te kultures Materiale. Pjesa e parë
21	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/promovimi-i-identitetit-dhe-kultures-materiale-rome-zinxhiraj-gjirokaster-mixdown	3 Korrik 2015	Promovimi i identitetit dhe kulturës rome-Zinxhiraj Gjirokastër
22	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/promovimi-i-talenteve-te-reja-rome-fier-qershor-2015-mixdown?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	1 Korrik 2015	Ky podcast synon të promovojë talentet e reja rome. Intervistat janë realizuar me dy djem të talentuar nga zona e Baltëzës në Fier. Emilio Veizi është i apasionuar pas muzikës. Dejvi

					Koçi realizon vizatime dhe portrete profesionale.
23	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/zgjedhjet-lokale-2015-baltez-ka-xhaha-te-votonaha-podcast-mixdown?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	21 Qershor 2015	Aktiviteti i radhës lidhur me rëndësinë e pjesmarrjes në procesin e votimit, u organizua në fshatin Baltez në Fier. Njihet si një zonë ku janë ruajtur elemente të kulturës materiale dhe shpirtërore. Gjithashtu për banorë që janë marrë gjatë gjithë kohës me punë bujqësore.
24	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/zgjedhjet-lokale-2015-nishtulla-ka-xhaha-te-votonaha-podcast?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	10 Qershor 2015	Aktiviteti i radhës lidhur me rëndësinë e pjesmarrjes në procesin e votimit, u organizua në zonën e Nishtullës në Durrës. Njihet si një zonë ku janë ruajtur elemente të kulturës materiale dhe shpirtërore. Ky podcast synon të ndërgjegjësojë të rinjtë rom për të marrë pjesë në Zgjedhjet Lokale 2015.
25	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/radiokanxura/zgjedhjet-vendore-2015-ka-dzas-te-votonas-podcast?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=facebook	8 Qershor 2015	Ky podcast synon të ndërgjegjësojë të rinjtë rom për të marrë pjesë në Zgjedhjet Lokale 2015.
26	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/xhenson-cela/gjuha-rome-b-kodra-elemente-te-kultures-rome-podcast	24 Maj 2015	Link i paaksesueshëm
27	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/xhenson-cela/gjuha-rome-b-kodra-elemente-te-kultures-rome-podcast	11 Maj 2015	Link i paaksesueshëm
28	Mediatori permes medias online	Podcast Radio	https://soundcloud.com/xhenson-cela/radio-kanxura-interview-with-ms-marsela-taho-facilitator-of-ref-programs-in-albania	11 Maj 2015	Link i paaksesueshëm

ANNEX X – Data on Roma Projects and Programmes in Albania

Nr.	Titulli	Institucioni	Lloji	Data	Link	Qëllimi/Rezultati
1	Studim për vlerësimin e nevojave të komuniteteve egjiptiane dhe rome në Shqipëri	UNDP	Studim	29/2/2012	http://www.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/roma%20report%20in%20Albanian.pdf	Ky studim synon të bëjë sa më të qartë dhe të përshkruajë gjendjen social-ekonomike të komuniteteve rome dhe egjiptiane në Shqipëri, duke përdorur tregues dhe metodologji të ndryshme.
2	“Për përmirësimin e kushteve të jetesës së MINORITETIT ROM”	OSBE	Strategji Kombëtare	18/9/2003	http://www.osce.org/sq/albani/a/21233?download=true	Analizë gjithëpërfshirëse
3	Raporti rajonal mbi antidiskriminimin dhe pjesëmarrjen e Romëve në vendimmarrjen lokale	OSBE	Raport	05/01/13	http://www.osce.org/sq/odihr/102086?download=true	Raporti shqyrton dhe përshkruan iniciativat antidiskriminim dhe përfshirje në vendimmarrje, në rajonin e BP.
4	“E drejta për arsim e komunitetit rom në kuadrin e integritetit të Republikës së Shqipërisë në Bashkimin Evropian”	Universiteti I Tiranës	Punim doktore	x/x/2013	http://www.doktoratura.unitir.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Doktoratura-Elisabeta-Osmanaj-Fakulteti-i-Shkencave-Sociale-Departamenti-Pune-Sociale.pdf	Synon të dëshmojë se sa i rëndësishëm është arsimimi i komunitetit rom për zhvillimin e qëndrueshëm të vendit dhe në kuadrin e integritetit në BE
5	DEKADA E ROMËVE DHE SITUATA E ROMËVE NË SHQIPËRI, 2012	OSFA	Studim	x/x/2013	https://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/book_3_dekada.pdf	Analizë gjithëpërfshirëse bazuar në anketa të zhvilluara me anëtarët e komunitetit

6	STUDIM MBI PROBLEMATIKAT E DISKRIMINIMIT TE KOMUNITETIT ROM NE SHQIPERI	Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi	Studim	12/01/14	http://kmd.al/skedaret/1443013356-Studim%20mbi%20problematikat%20e%20diskriminimit%20te%20komunitetit%20Rom%20ne%20Shqiperi.pdf	Analizë e kuadrit ligjor kundër diskriminimit
7	Studentët romë, një çështje publike, një zgjidhje private	UET	Bursa studimi	x/x2012	http://www.uet.edu.al/index.php/sq/evente/289-studentet-rome-nje-ceshtje-publike-nje-zgjidhje-private	Rritja e përfshirjes në arsim
8	Monitorimi nga Shoqëria Civile i Zbatimit të Strategjisë Kombëtare dhe i Planit të Veprimit të Dekadës Rome në vitin 2012 në SHQIPËRI	Roma Active Albania; Unioni Rom i Beratit	Monitorim	x/x2013	http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9270_file1_al_civil-society-monitoring-report_al.pdf	Monitorim I strategjisë; rekomandime për rishikim të strategjisë
9	Studim kombëtar mbi fëmijët në situatë rruge në Shqipëri	ARSIS GFK Shqipëri Ekspert ndërkombëtar	Studim kombëtar	04/01/14	http://www.sociale.gov.al/files/news_files/Studimi.pdf	Qëllimi ishte përvijimi i pamjes më të saktë të mundshme të fenomenit të fëmijëve në situatë rruge në Shqipëri dhe ofrimi i rekomandimeve të bazuara në fakte
10	SITUATA ARSIMORE E FËMIJËVE ROMË NË SHQIPËRI	Qendra e zhvillimeve humane	Raport studimor	x/x/2007	https://albania.savethechildren.net/sites/albania.savethechildren.net/files/library/Educational%20Situation%20%20of%20Roma%20Children%20in%20Albania.pdf	Analizë e situatës arsimore dhe rekomandime
11	POLITIKAT E PËRFSHIRJES SOCIALE PËR FËMIJËT DHE FINANCIMI I TYRE NË SHQIPËR	ACER; URI; ASET	Përmbledhje studimesh	x/x/2010	http://www.unicef.org/albania/Children_Social_Inclusion_Shqip13.pdf	Analizë gjithëpërfshirëse

12	Raporti vlerësues në Shqipëri	Roma Education Fund	Raport	x/x/2011	http://www.romaeducationfund.hu/sites/default/files/publications/ref_ca_2011_alb_albanian_screen3.pdf	Ai synon të ofrojë një analizë mbi arsimin dhe reformat arsimore nga perspektiva e përfshirjes së fëmijëve romë në vendet që bëjnë pjesë në Dekadën e Përfshirjes së Romëve
13	MBI SITUATËN E ROMËVE QË JETOJNË E PUNOJNË NË VENDSHKARKIMIN E MBETURINAVE NË SHARRË	Forumi I Pavarur I Gruas Shqiptare	Raport studimor	x/x/2007	http://italcoopalbania.org/pdf/Sharra_ALB_web.pdf	Fushatë informuese dhe sensibilizuese, të drejtuar në mënyrë të veçantë tek fëmijët, mbi rreziqet që përmban veprimtaria e mbledhjes së mbeturinave.
14	Të rinjtë Romë në veprim	Save the Children	Studim	x/x/2015	http://www.gazeta-shqip.com/lajme/2015/05/21/vetem-11-e-romeve-figurojnete-punesuar/	Analizë e situatës së të rinjve.
15	Çështje të arsimimit të fëmijëve të komunitetit Rom	OSFA; IRCA; ICLA	Studim krahasues në dy zona të Fierit	1/10/2013	http://www.icla.co/web/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/%C3%87%C3%ABshtjet%C3%AB-arsimimit%C3%AB-f%C3%ABmij%C3%ABvet%C3%AB-komunitetit-Rom.pdf	Ngritjen dhe përmirësimi i kapaciteteve të komunitetit dhe organizatave Rome aktive në rrethin e Fierit për analizimin e strategjive dhe të menduarit kritik
16	ANALIZË E LEGJISLACIONIT SHQIPTAR ME QËLLIM TRAJTIMIN E PROBLEMIT TË STREHIMIT	OSFA	Analizë	09/01/14	http://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/analize_e_legjislacionit_per_problemet_e_strehimit.pdf	TRAJTIMI I PROBLEMIT TË STREHIMIT TË SHTRËSAVE TË MARGJINALIZUARA TË POPULLSISË TË CILËT RREZIKOJNË DËBIMIN ME FORCË NGA VENDBANIMET E TYRE
17	Plani Vendor i Veprimit i Bashkisë Gjirokastër për Integrimin e Romëve	Bashkia Gjirokastër	Plan Veprimi	x/x/2013	http://bpri-odihr.org/single-news/items/LAPs_Albania.html?file=tl_files/new/LAPS/L	Integrim i komunitetit rom në jetën soci-ekonomike të qarkut

	dhe Egjiptianëve 2013-2015				AP%20Gjirokastra%20ALB.pdf	
18	Census: Banesat rome	OSFA	Census	x/x/2014	http://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/roma_census_albanian.pdf	Evidentimi I banesave të Romëve në Shqipëri
19	Grimca Etnografike	OSFA	Studim	x/x/2012	http://www.osfa.al/sites/default/files/final_grimca.pdf	ASPEKTE TË HISTORISË, KULTURËS DHE TRADITËS ROME NËPËRMJET RRËFIMEVE PËRSONALE TË ANËTARËVE TË KOMUNITETI NË SHQIPËRI
20	MBULIMI I GRUPEVE VULNERABËL NË MEDIAN SHQIPTARE	AMI;OSFA	Monitorim	04/01/15	http://www.osfa.al/publikime/prezantohen-gjetjet-e-raportit-te-monitorimit-vleresimi-i-standarde-etike-te-mbulimit-te-grupeve-vulnerabel-ne-median-shqiptare	Përfaqësimi I grupeve të marxhinalizuar në median e shkruar, vizine dhe online
21	Basic facts on Roma Albania	European Roma Rights Center	Përmbledhje	28/08/2010	http://www.errc.org/article/basic-facts-on-roma--albania/3622	Paraqitje e fakteve bazë
22	Roma of Albania	CEDIME-SE	Raport	08/01/00	http://www.greekhelsinki.gr/pdf/cedime-se-albania-roma.doc	Raport I përgjithshëm
23	Roma in Albania	UNDP	Profil I vendit	06/01/12	http://www.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/misc/Roma%20in%20Albania%20June%202012%20profile.pdf	Raport I përgjithshëm
24	Albania: Situation of Roma, including access to education, employment, housing and social services; treatment of Roma by society and authorities	Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada	Raport	16/6/2014	http://www.refworld.org/docid/53b13bfb4.html	Raport I përgjithshëm

	(2011-June 2014)					
25	Albanian National Strategy for improving Roma living conditions	OSBE	Strategji Kombëtare	18/9/2003	http://www.osce.org/albania/21232	Analizë gjithëpërfshirëse
26	EMPOWERING VULNERABLE LOCAL COMMUNITIES OF ALBANIA	UN	Projekt 3 vjeçar	1/6/2010 - 1/6/2013	http://www.un.org.al/subindex.php?faq=details&id=73	Përmirësimi i aksesit të grupeve vulnerabile në të drejtat e tyre socio-ekonomike
27	Housing and Roma communities in Albania	ARRISEC	Prezantim	x/x/2012	http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9461_file8_enerida.isuf.pdf	Prenzati i situatës së strehimit
28	Factors affecting Roma Integration in Albania	IDRA; OSFA	Studim	x/x/2012	http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9662_file1_comparative-study-factors-affecting-roma-inclusion-in-albania-final-docx.pdf	Studim ndërdisiplinor mbi përfshirjen e komuniteti rom
29	BASIC INFORMATION ON THE SITUATION OF THE ROMA MINORITY	Roma Decade	Progres raport	x/x/2012	http://www.romadecade.org/cms/upload/file/9276_file9_progress_report_al.pdf	Paraqitje e fakteve bazë
30	STUDY OF THE PROBLEMATIC OF DISCRIMINATION OF ROMA COMMUNITIES IN ALBANIA	Komisioneri për Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi	Studim	x/x/2014	http://kmd.al/skedaret/1443013357-Study%20of%20the%20problematic%20of%20discrimination%20of%20Roma%20community%20in%20Albania.pdf	Analizë e kuadrit ligjor kundër diskriminimit
31	ECRI report on Albania	ECRI	Raport	03/02/10	https://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/ecri/Country-by-country/Albania/ALB-CbC-IV-2010-001-ENG.pdf	Raport i përgjithshëm
32	ROMA CHILDREN ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD SERVICES	CRCA	Studim	05/01/15	http://www.crca.al/sites/default/files/publications/ALBANIA%20-%20ROMA%20CHILDREN%20ACCESS%20TO%20EARLY%20CHILDHOOD%20S	Përmirësimi i aksesit të fëmijëve romë në shërbimet e nevojshme sociale

					ERVICES%202014.pdf	
33	Roma and Egyptians in Albania: From social exclusion to social inclusion	World Bank	Raport	04/01/05	http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/0-8213-6171-6 ; https://books.google.fi/books?id=eLDiHsezD8EC&pg=PA54&lpg=PA54&dq=Roma+youth+in+Albania&source=bl&ots=t3VBeNXZr6&sig=rwelsfykdcNmzlb9o3F1Gc3qb4c&hl=fi&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiK1q2pvd7KAhXjg3IKHeyZDeA4ChDoAQg8MAU#v=onepage&q=Roma%20youth%20in%20Albania&f=false	Analizë e procesit të përjashtimit social në Shqipëri
34	The Action Research National Report	Roma Active Albania; Save the Children	Raport	x/x/2014	https://albania.savethechildren.net/sites/albania.savethechildren.net/files/library/English%20-%20formatted-V13-cover_2.pdf	Raport I përgjithshëm për kërkimet dhe studimet në Fier
35	Housing Policies and Practice for Roma in Albania	UNDP Albania	Studim I kontekstit	09/01/13	http://www.undp.org/content/dam/albania/docs/misc/Housing%20Policies%20and%20Practice%20for%20Roma%20in%20Albania.pdf	Studim me qëllim përmirësimit të lehtësive dhe kapaciteteve për strehim
36	Unburdening the heavy-laden Roma in Albania	BMS World Mission	Blog post	06/04/15	http://www.bmsworldmission.org/news-blogs/archive/unburdening-the-heavy-laden-roma-albania	Zbutja e marxhinalizimit të komunitetit rom në Shqipëri
37	Faces and Causes of Marginalization of the Roma in Local Settings	Center for Policy Studies	Sondazh	x/x/2011	http://cps.ceu.edu/research/roma-marginalization	Hartëzimi I situatës aktuale socio-ekonomike

38	Opening up neë prospect for the future through the vocational and social integration of ëomen, Roma, migrants and young people	ACT Alliance	Projekt	13/2/2015	http://actalliance.org/act-news/opening-up-new-prospect-for-the-future-through-the-vocational-and-social-integration-of-women-roma-migrants-and-young-people/	Integrimi social
39	Countering marginalization through alternative media: Roma communities Radio	UET Center	Prezantim	x/x/2015	http://www.uetcentre.org/porta l/images/sampled data/1.pdf	Prezantim I mediave të komuniteti Rom
40	Minority Rights in Albania: Roma youth empoëerment through education and leadership”	UET Center; KAS; ICRA	Projekt	6/6/2014 - 14/6/2014	http://uetcentre.org/portal/ima ges/Kas_projects.pdf	Fuqizim I rinisë rome për të luftuar diskriminimin
41	Gjithëpërfshirja në arsim një përmbledhje punimesh kërkimore	UET Center	Përmbledhje studimesh		http://www.uetcentre.org/porta l/pdf/Soros%20AL%20Book%204%20Inclusive%20Educa tion.pdf	Përmirësimi I përfshirjes në arsim të fëmijëve romë
42	School Segregation of Roma and Egyptian Communities in Albania	European Roma Rights Center	Video	24/11/2015	http://www.errc.org/article/sch ool-segregation-of-roma-and-egyptian-communities-in-albania/4429	Pasqyrim I segregimit në shkolla të komunitetve rome dhe egjiptiane
43	Threats to Roma Housing Rights in Albania	European Roma Rights Center	Article	13/11/2006	http://www.errc.org/article/thr eats-to-roma-housing-rights-in-albania/2662	Pasqyrim I problemeve të strehimit për komunitetin rom
44	Human Rights in Albania	Civil Rights Defenders	Report	13/8/2015	http://www.civilrightsdefender s.org/country-reports/human-rights-in-albania/	Pasqyrim I situatës së të drejtave të njeriut në Shqipëri
45	Empoëering Marginalized Communities in Albania	UNDP	Projekt		http://www.al.undp.org/conten t/albania/en/home/ourwork/po vertyreduction/successtories/ empowering-marginalized-communities-in-albania.html	Prezantim I rezultateve të programit të UNDP
46	Protection of Minorities in Albania pursuant to	Komisioneri për	Raport	x/x/2013	http://www.osce.org/albania/110959?download=true	Informacion mbi të drejtat përkatëse ligjore për personat

	the Law for Protection from Discrimination	Mbrojtjen nga Diskriminimi				që i përkasin grupeve të marxhinalizuara
47	ACCESSIBLE JUSTICE SYSTEM FOR ALL: THE CASE OF THE ROMA MINORITY IN ALBANIA	ECMI	Working Paper	02/01/15	http://www.ecmi.de/uploads/tx_lfpubdb/ECMI_Working_Paper_84.pdf	Aksesi në sistemin e drejtësisë për komunitetin rom
48	Country report	World Directory of Minorities and Indigenous Peoples	Fakte dhe të dhëna		http://minorityrights.org/country/albania/	Paraqitje e fakteve bazë
49	ROMA YOUTH EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP	UET Center; KAS	Konferencë	07/03/14	http://www.kas.de/wf/doc/kas_38298-1522-19-30.pdf?150421152933	Konferencë mbi fuqizimin e rinjve romë përmes edukimit
50	Empowering Minority Groups in Albania	Borgen Projects	Blog post	13/11/2014	http://borgenproject.org/empowering-minority-groups-albania/	Paraqitje e situatës
51	Afro-American Movement: Guide for Respect for Minority Rights in Albania	IRCA	Projekt	16/9/2015	http://irca.al/post?lang=en&m=8&p=37	Sfidat aktuale të komunitetit rom në Shqipëri
52	Supporting Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian Communities	UNDP Albania	Projekt	2012-2014	http://www.al.undp.org/content/albania/en/home/operations/projects/poverty_reduction/supporting-social-inclusion-of-roma-and-egyptian-communities.html	Pasqyrim i rezultateve të projektit
53	Supporting Social Inclusion of Roma and Egyptian communities.	IPA Albania	Projekt	x/x/2011	http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement/pdf/albania/ipa/2011/pf_6_roma.pdf	Projekt mbi përmirësimin e kushteve të komunitetit rom nga Bashkimi Europian

54	Aëard for Roma Integration in the ëestern Balkans and Turkey	Bashkimi European	çmim	10/01/14	https://eudelegationalbania.wordpress.com/2014/10/01/award-for-roma-integration-in-the-western-balkans-and-turkey/	Synimi i çmimeve është të rrisë rëndësinë politike të integritit të romëve si pjesë e procesit të zgjerimit, të rrisë rolin e shoqërisë civile dhe të tregojë angazhimin e Komisionit Evropian për mbështetjen e popullsisë rome.
55	Roma and Egyptian Communities in Korca benefit from renovated infrastructure funded by the EU	Bashkimi European	Projekt	18/9/2015	http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/albania/press_corner/all_news/news/2015/20150918_en.htm	Në mbështetje të përfshirjes sociale të komunitetit rom
56	Council of Europe trains Albanian journalists hoë to better report on Roma, LGBT and people ëith mental health problems	Këshilli I Europës	Projekt	17/4/2015	http://www.coe.int/en/web/tirana/home/-/asset_publisher/jBIT72b4fYFW/content/council-of-europe-trains-albanian-journalists-how-to-better-report-on-roma-lgbt-and-people-with-mental-health-problems?inheritRedirect=false	Përmirësimi i cilësisë së raportimit mbi çështjet e minoriteteve
57	ëorking ëith ëomen Building the Future “One step toëards inclusion”	Roma Active Albania	Projekt	20/6/2001 - 20/5/2002	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/working-with-women-building-the-future-one-step-towards-inclusion.html	Përfshirja e gruas rome në shoqëri
58	Strengthening community cooperation in the Kombinat area, as a good model to prevent school abandonment of children at risk	International Assosiation for Solidarity	Projekt		http://www.eromaresource.com/project/strengthening-community-cooperation-in-the-kombinat-area-as-a-good-model-to-prevent-school-abandonment-of-children-at-risk.html	Zvogëlimi i numrit të fëmijëve rom që braktisin shkollën

59	Reducing the level of poverty of the Roma communities in Baltez/Fier	Union for Development and Integration of Roma Minority in Albania	Projekt	20/6/2011	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/reducing-the-level-of-poverty-of-the-roma-community-in-baltezfier.html	Zvogëlimi I varfërisë
60	Reducing the level of poverty of the Roma communities in Saver/Lushnje	Union for Development and Integration of Roma Minority in Albania	Projekt		http://www.eromaresource.com/project/reducing-the-level-of-poverty-in-the-roma-community-in-saverlushnje.html	Zvogëlimi I varfërisë
61	Roma Mediator –an effective model for health services access improvement in Roma communities	National Centre for Community Services	Projekt	20/9/2001	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/roma-mediator-an-effective-model-for-health-services-access-improvement-in-roma-community.html	Përmirësimi I kushteve të shërbimeve shëndetësore
62	An inter-institutional approach to prevent and reduce the school dropout in three schools of compulsory education in Kombinat.	International Association for Solidarity	Projekt		http://www.eromaresource.com/project/an-inter-institutional-approach-to-prevent-and-reduce-the-school-dropout-in-three-schools-of-compulsory-education-in-kombinat.html	Zvogëlimi I numrit të fëmijëve rom që braktisin shkollën
63	Protection and integration of street children in Tirana	Save the Children	Projekt		http://www.eromaresource.com/project/protection-and-integration-of-street-children-in-tirana.html	Integrimi I fëmijëve të rrugës në Tiranë
64	IPA funds as an effective instrument for a better impact of Roma	OSFA	Projekt	20/12/2001-20/02/20	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/ipa-funds-as-an-effective-instrument-for-a-better-impact-of-roma.html	Përmirësimi dhe integrimi I komunitetit rom

	inclusion policies in the Elbasan Region			28	better-impact-of-roma-inclusion-policies-in-the-elbasan-region.html	
65	Foster social inclusion of Roma communities in Albania through targeted interventions for vulnerable children	Ombudsman Albania	Projekt	January 2014-September 2015	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/foster-social-inclusion-of-roma-communities-in-albania-through-targeted-interventions-for-vulnerable-children.html	Përmirësimi dhe integrimi I komunitetit rom
66	Developing a Child Protection Safety Net (2009-2012)	Terre des hommes (mission in Albania)	Projekt	20/10/2001-20/12/2004	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/developing-a-child-protection-safety-net-2009-2012.html	Integrimi I fëmijëve të rrugës në Tiranë
67	Civil society actions for the development of disadvantaged communities - Bregu i Lumit Intervention	National Association Education for Life	Projekt		http://www.eromaresource.com/project/civil-society-actions-for-the-development-of-disadvantaged-communities--bregu-i-lumit-intervention.html	Përmirësimi dhe integrimi I komunitetit rom
68	Civil registration of Roma population in Fieri area	Roma Active Albania	Projekt	20/06/2001-20/01/2002	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/civil-registration-of-roma-population-in-fieri-area.html	Regjistrim I popullsisë
69	Children ready for School, School ready for Children	Network of Community Centers	Projekt	20/07/2001-20/07/2003	http://www.eromaresource.com/project/children-ready-for-school-school-ready-for-children.html	Zvogëlimi I numrit të fëmijëve rom që braktisin shkollën + asistencë
70	Një strehë për fëmijët Romë	Ecovolis	Projekt Fundraising	1/2/2016 - 29/2/2016	https://www.facebook.com/events/1674764762735432/ http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/activists-to-create-the-first-roma-campers-park-in-albania-01-21-2016	Mbledhja e fondeve për të mundësuar strehimin e 50 familjeve që jetojnë në zonën e Bregut të Lumit, nëpër rulota.

71	Where are the Media When the Pope Talks about Roma?	Media Diversity Institute	Artikull	06/12/14	http://www.media-diversity.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2773:where-are-the-media-when-the-pope-talks-about-roma&catid=35:media-news-a-content&Itemid=34	Ngritja e problematikës së raportimit të Romëve në media
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