



Romanians criticize communication of politicians

KAS and the Center for Independent Journalism present an opinion poll on media topics and a new monitoring of political reporting

According to a representative survey commissioned by the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), only seven percent of the Romanians feel well informed by their politicians. Hence, the population lacks trust in the media. Only 28 percent believe that the media work independent. Furthermore, KAS and the Center for Independent Journalism (CIJ) presented a monitoring of the political reporting. Most mentioned politician in the Romanian media is Prime Minister Victor Ponta, followed by the former President Traian Băsescu. The new President Klaus Iohannis was the third most mentioned politician in 2014. In general, politicians and parties are presented rather critically.

A vast majority of Romanians feels insufficiently informed about political decisions. Only seven percent evaluate the communication of politicians positively, while 72 percent criticise it. 21 percent are indecisive or did not answer on this topic. According to the citizens, chances of the internet and social media are insufficiently used by the political elites as well. Thus, only a minority of the Romanians (38 percent) agrees that the politicians are looking for a dialogue with the citizens on the internet. Approximately 1.000 adult persons participated in this opinion poll, realised by the independent institute Market Links on behalf of the KAS. Christian Spahr, Head of the KAS Media Program South East Europe, emphasized: "Nowadays, political communication is much more than propaganda. Citizens expect to be seen as serious dialogue partners. Therefore, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung will continue to support modern forms of political communication focusing on transparency and common interest."

The media sector is evaluated critically as well: The survey revealed that only 28 percent of the Romanians see the media as independent. 43 percent deny free reporting in Romania, a lot of citizens are indecisive. "The image of the media sector barely improved", says Christian Spahr. "If traditional media want to remain opinion leaders, they must focus on high professional standards."

Moreover, the KAS Media Program and CIJ presented a monitoring of the political reporting in Romania. Most mentioned politician in the media is Prime Minister Victor Ponta. He is followed by the former President Traian Băsescu, who is mentioned 33 percent less often than Ponta. The new President Klaus Iohannis had the third strongest media exposure in 2014 – with an increasing tendency. In the eight analysed media outlets – four TV channels and four newspapers – Ponta is evaluated distinctly more negative than Băsescu and Iohannis.



Ponta's Social Democratic Party (PSD) is the most mentioned political group in the media. Second and third most mentioned parties are the National Liberal Party (PNL) and the Democratic Liberal Party (PD-L). Comparing the media picture of PSD and PNL, the social democrats are perceived more critically than the National Liberal Party.

Ioana Avadani, head of the CIJ, explained: "As usual, the electoral years harshen the tone of the political news. The presidential campaign – that went way beyond the legal 30 days – led to a concentration of the political reporting on the main actors: the president in function and the two best placed candidates. The double capacity of Mr. Ponta as a prime minister and a co-tender led to his supra-exposure. The predominantly negative coverage of the political parties, especially those in power, should trigger a serious alarm for their leaders."

The analysis of the political reporting was done by the "Market Links" institute as well, on behalf of the KAS Media Program. Almost 13.000 political news items on four TV channels (Antena 1, PROTV, Realitatea, TVR1) and in four daily newspapers (Adevarul, Evenimentul Zilei, Jurnalul National, Romania Libera) were analysed from January until December 2014.

Further information is available on: www.kas.de/medien-europa/en