COMPACT – Brussels Symposium

Disinformation in the European Elections 2019:

The role of social media and technology trends

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About us

MEMO 98 helps people to receive fair and comprehensive information about public affairs. Having worked for 19 years in Slovakia and abroad, we belong to global leaders in media monitoring and elections. Our main goal is to ensure that people require good quality media content - essential for enhancing of their critical thinking.
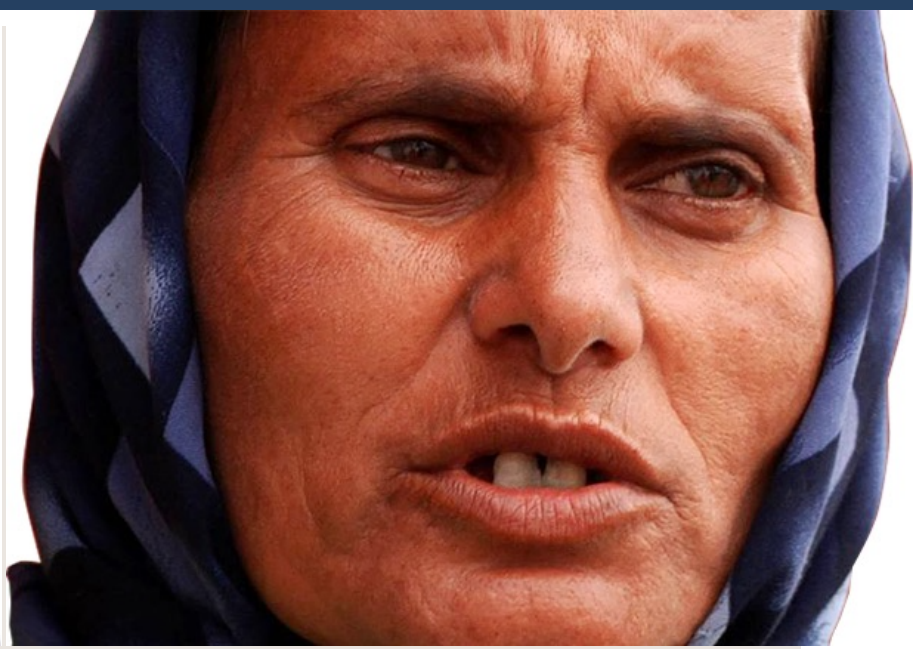
Where we work

What we do

REGIONAL VOICES

COLORFUL BUT COLORBLIND

MEDIA MONITORING
Explaining what the media reports

ELECTIONS
Good quality information means better choice

MINORITIES
Changing stereotypes in the media

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL MEDIA MONITORING AND SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING

Traditional media monitoring	Social media monitoring
Clear benchmarks to judge the media	Unclear benchmarks to judge social media
Clear on - WHAT to focus (media sample) 　　　WHEN to focus 　　　HOW to analyse	Not so clear – WHAT to monitor 　　　WHEN to monitor 　　　HOW to monitor
Clear on WHAT TOOLS to use	Different TOOLs exist for SMM
Reliance on human coders & monitors	There is a need to use technology (AI)
Clear on purpose of media monitoring	Why we monitor social media during elections?

RISK & CAPACITY ASSESSMENT – THINGS TO CONSIDER

Mapping the media & social media landscape
Which social media are relevant for mm

Human & financial resources

Tools for data scrapping

Regulations and laws

NEWSWHIP

crowdtangle

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STARTING QUESTIONS

International standards and areas of assessment

There is a need to formalise a general methodological framework to observe social media. The existing **international standards for freedom of expression** and **right to participation** are an adequate starting point to identify benchmarks for observation and assessment. In particular, the United Nations Committee on Human Rights' General Comment 25, which protects the voters' right to form opinions independently, free of manipulative interference of any kind, can be the basis for social media assessment.

Election period   Post Election period

When to start monitoring?

Messenger

- Source of information

Message

- Topics & narratives

Messaging

- Focus on how a message travels

Political parties & politicians
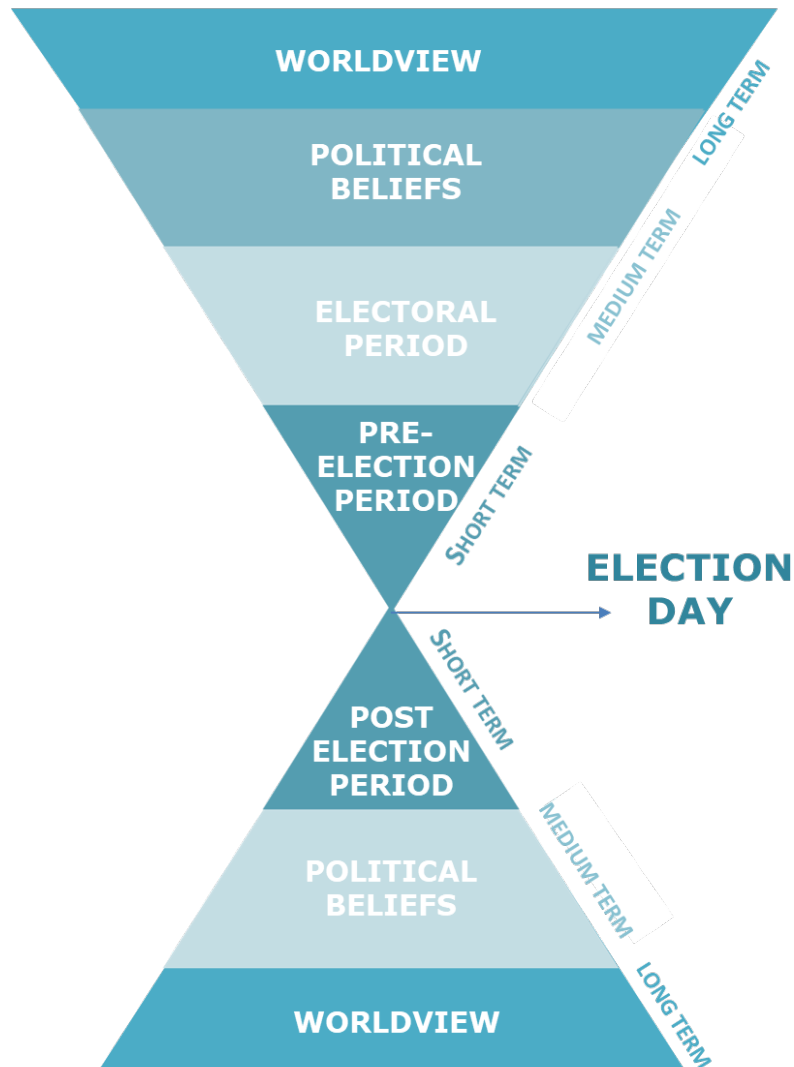
Media

Influencers

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WHAT CAN BE OBSERVERED

Potential **areas of analysis** for social media by EU EOMs could include observation and assessment of the following:
1) the regulatory framework for social platforms;
2) the legal limitations to social networks activities;
3) the regulation of campaign expenditures on social platforms;
4) social media compliance with legal provisions;
5) liability for any potential breaches of the relevant laws, including possible sanctions and the right to appeal;
6) the existing initiatives to fight disinformation and dangerous speech, both public and private; and
7) the respect for privacy rights.

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THE TOOLKIT:
METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

DEMOCRACY
REPORTING
INTERNATIONAL

WORLDVIEW

POLITICAL BELIEFS

ELECTORAL PERIOD

PRE-ELECTION PERIOD

LONG TERM

MEDIUM TERM

SHORT TERM

ELECTION DAY

SHORT TERM

POST ELECTION PERIOD

POLITICAL BELIEFS

MEDIUM TERM

WORLDVIEW

LONG TERM

ATTEMPTS TO INFLUENCE ELECTORAL RESULTS

SHORT TERM

- Voter suppression
- Electoral integrity
- Electoral fraud
- Questioning the results

MEDIUM TERM

- Discrediting campaigns
- Divisive narratives
- Information aimed at confusing voters
- Microtargeting

LONG TERM

- Polarization
- Attacks on democratic institutions
- Political apathy

IMPLEMENTATION:
FIVE ELECTIONS IN EU COUNTRIES

Five CSOs/Research organizations will perform a **SOCIAL MEDIA RISK ANALYSIS** to assess the threats surrounding their respective upcoming elections and **TEST OUT THE TOOLKIT**, issuing reports containing their findings on the role of social media during the electoral process.
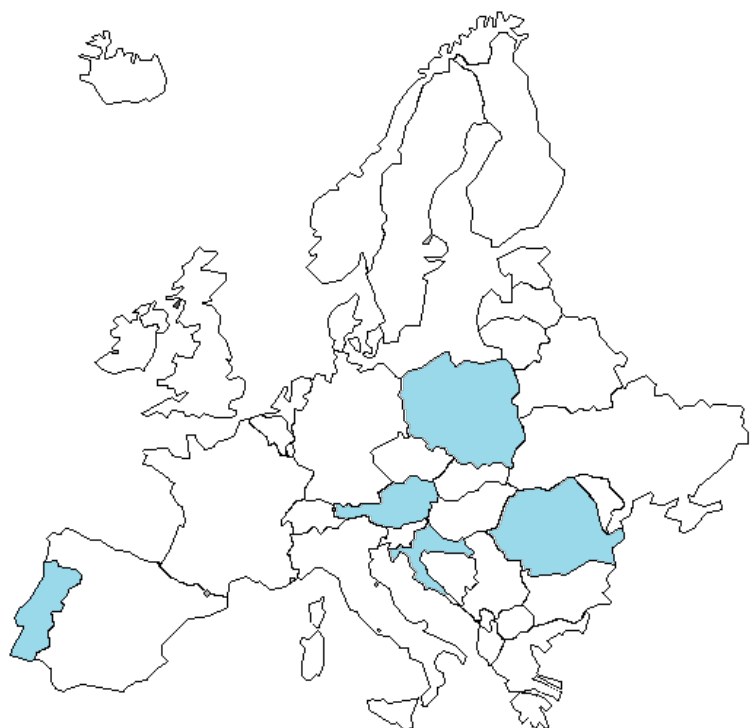
Austria: September 29, 2019 (legislative elections)
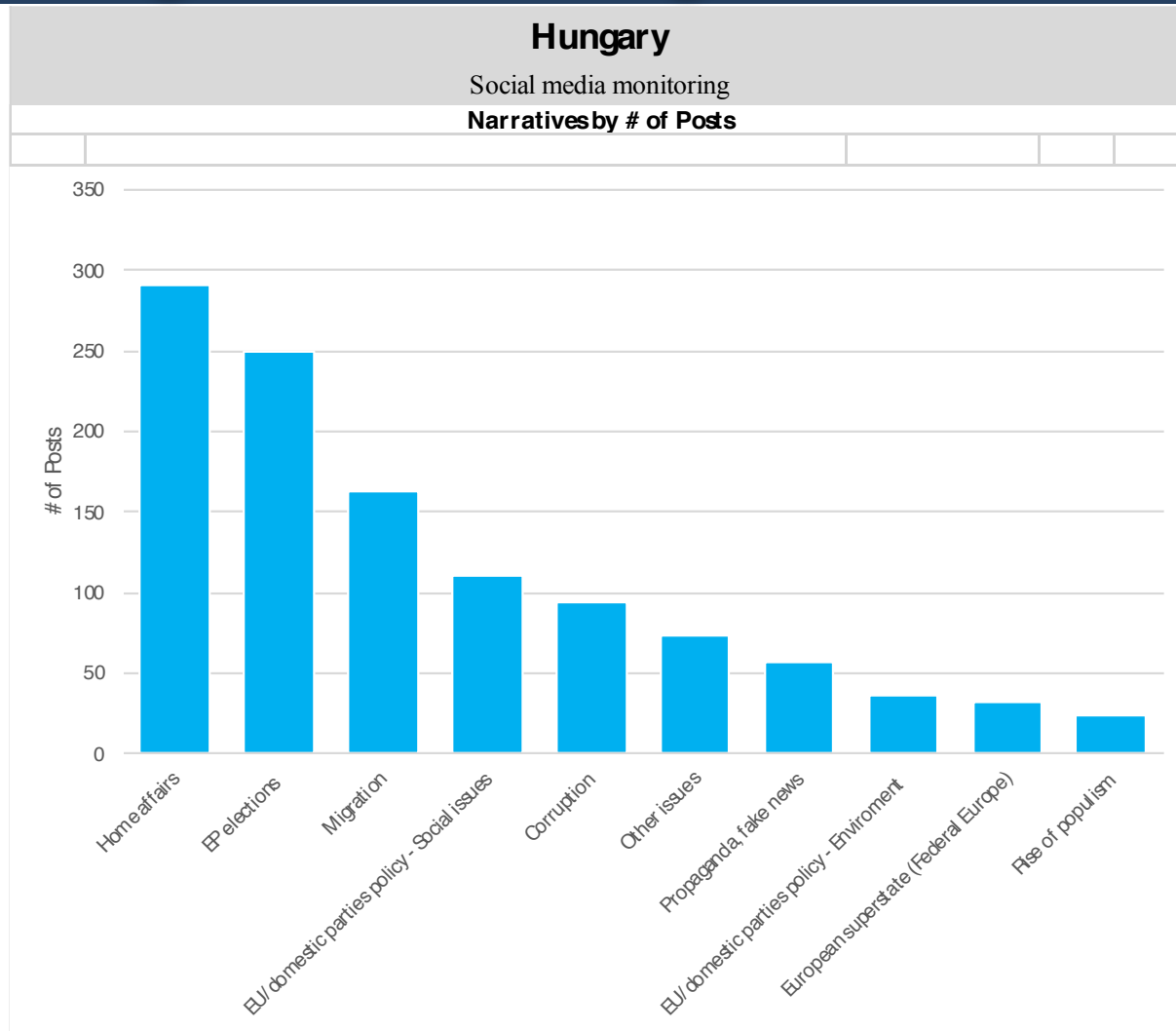Project Partner: ElectionWatch.eu

Portugal: October 6, 2019 (legislative elections)
Project Partner: Instituto Universitário de Lisboa (ISCTE)

Poland: October 13, 2019 (legislative elections)
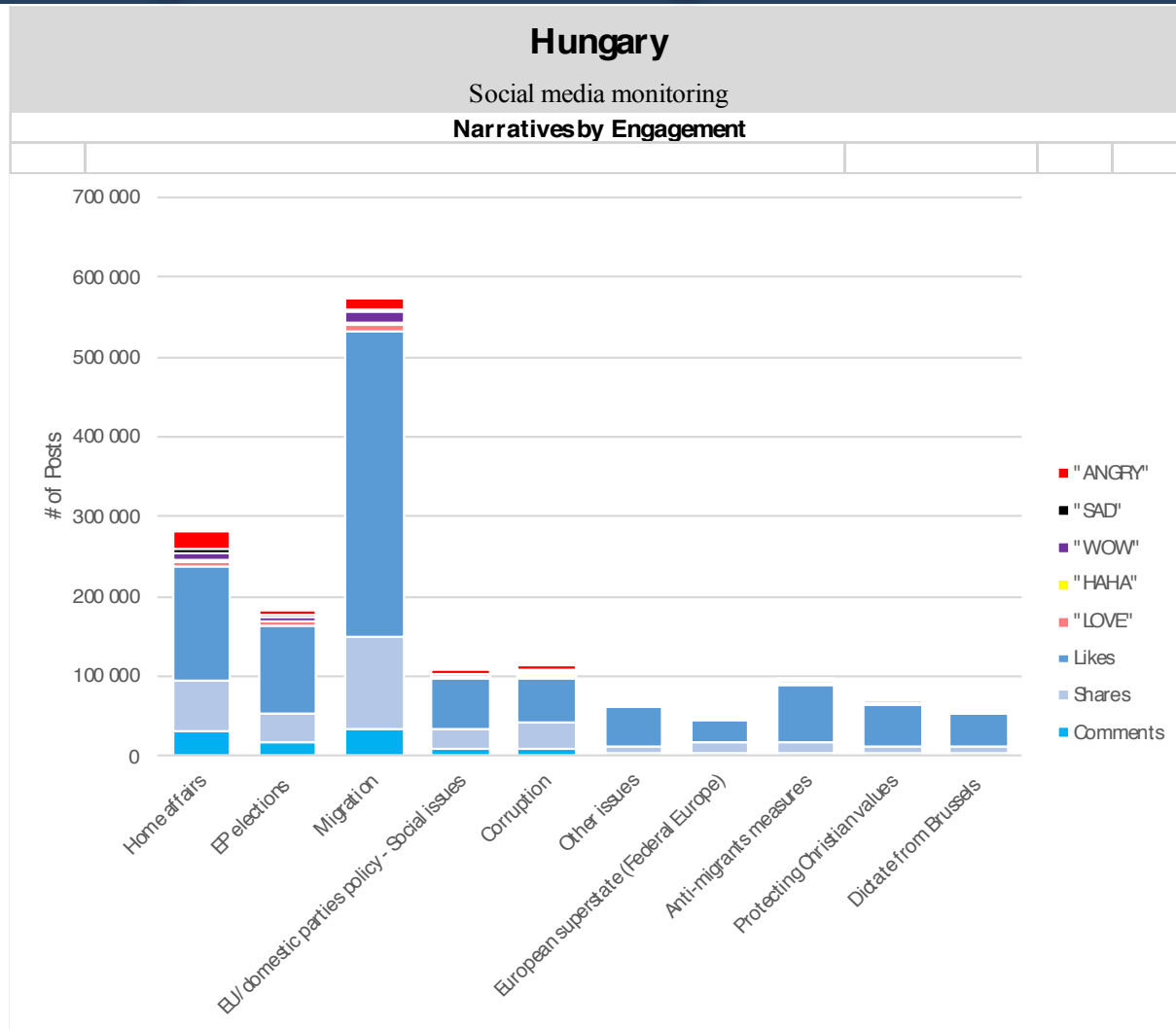Project Partner: Political Accountability Foundation (PAC)

Croatia: by January 20, 2020 (presidential elections)
Project Partner: GONG

Romania: November 10, 2019 (presidential elections)
Project Partner: TBD

Hungary

Social media monitoring

Narratives by # of Posts

Monitoring of FB during EP elections 2019

Hungary

Social media monitoring

Narratives by Engagement

Thank you