



Interlink's Director Werner Eggert holding the opening ceremony of the Global Investigative Journalism Conference 2019 in Hamburg

Our Zambian trainers Joseph Mwenda and Joan Chirwa teaching fact-checking and investigative research in Lusaka

Message from the Director



Werner Eggert

When I try to recall all the activities by Interlink Academy in 2019, I have to be attentive not to miss anything. It has been the busiest year since it was founded in 2014.

We conducted training in Africa, Asia and Europe, examined how artificial intelligence can foster independent quality journalism, and supported the publication of handbooks and manuals. A lot of our energy went into the co-organization of the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in September. We spent more than a year preparing for this event which drew more than 1700 journalists to Hamburg, Germany.

All this work we did with the support of our long-time partners and sponsors. They have been working with us for years, and their number has been growing steadily. We are very thankful for this support.

All the funding we receive goes directly into our project work and will continue to do so. However, because of the tremendous growth of Interlink Academy in the last year, we need to strengthen our administration. If you want to support us in doing so, your contribution is more than welcome.

I wish you all a great new year 2020!

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Trainers Bijay Gajmer (first left in bottom row) and Bikash Karki (second left in top row) with the course participants

Mobile Video Reporting for Community Journalists in Nepal

Once again, community journalists in Nepal got the chance to hone their skills and expand their reporting opportunities this year with training in #MoJo – mobile journalism.

Last year, Interlink Academy trainers taught the course in cooperation with the Center for Media Research (CMR), preparing local trainers by passing on their knowledge and skills, both technical and didactic. That put the Nepalese trainers in a position to teach further iterations of the program.

The two-month course combined classroom sessions with e-learning in Interlink's time-proven blended learning model. The course provided comprehensive, in-depth training in mobile journalism, covering topics such as composition, portraiture, different video production and editing techniques.

Thanks to the coaching of our trainers during the e-learning periods, participants got the chance to test their newfound skills in their everyday lives and received support for situations that do not occur in the controlled environment of a classroom.

Get the inside scoop on the next page, where participant Barsha Schah writes about his experience.



Sharing Skills, Networking, Paying it Forward

Barsha Shah participated in the training program “Mobile Video Reporting for Community Journalists in Nepal 2019”. He works as a journalist at

I was very happy when I received the confirmation email about my selection for the Mobile Reporting for Nepali Journalists training. Being a photojournalist for digital media, I hoped that the training would be beneficial. Even so, the program exceeded my wildest expectations, as the training organized by Interlink Academy and the Center for Media Research, Nepal, was just excellent.

Not only did it help me to be better at my work, but it also helped my office. When after the course I told about what I had learned in an office meeting, the chairperson suggested buying a good mobile phone for the office.

The training was very much rewarding for me personally. I heard positive comments from my colleagues and seniors about the improvement in the photos I have taken following the training. Thanks to the course, nowadays I can choose the right technique according to the situation.

My participation in the training was very useful for my office. I shared the skills that I had learned in the workshops with my colleagues. Because of that sharing, they improved their skill as well. It also helps me when I am busy and cannot be on location, I can ask my colleagues to take their mobile phone and bring back photos and videos for stories. That helps our publication a lot and has changed the whole team.



Fellow participants becoming the subject of their colleagues' stories



Participants taking the chance to meet and learn from each other and establish important networking ties



Working on mobile video editing skills to spontaneously record current events and publish breaking stories





Happy faces: a community of young and freshly certified Ukrainian journalists in Chernivtsi

Summer Schools for Young Journalists in Ukraine

Four “Summer Schools for Young Journalists” were held in Ukraine this year. **Oleksandra Golovko**, project coordinator, shared her memories.

Doing the same thing four times per summer, four years in a row may seem boring or monotonous. This is not the case with me and the summer schools.

Firstly, every school is different in location, participants, and circumstances, and, secondly, the young journalists do not let me go rusty, sit empty-handed and empty-minded or bask in the sun or success.

The participants are a ball of energy and unquenchable source of laughter, joy, surprises, stories and new perspectives. I cannot say that everything goes easily and smoothly, this is an unattainable goal when you work with many people, but I have little to complain about as I had another summer of my life.

Even though I was a coordinator and had to be on edge all the time to avoid slightest mishaps, together with the participants I played games, went on quests, did interviews, took photos, helped with the voiceover, was one of the first secret advisers of their media products, and shed a tear or two when they were taking their final photos together before going home.

Though I am generally responsible for organizational aspects, I have my part in one session of the school. This is Day 2 when we do a “Game of Interview” and I play a passenger in a car. During this game, I so often merge with my character that the most common remark from the participants is: “You should be an actress! You were so natural!” I really enjoy the school fuss and keeping the gentle track of things.

What else can I say? Looking forward to the fifth year of the project, more trips, new participants, and challenges, of course.



Participants of the Zaporizhzhia summer school practicing an interview outside



Summer Schools: 10 Days of Practice, Fun, and Discoveries



Ready, steady, go: Poltava city quest and a photo story challenge



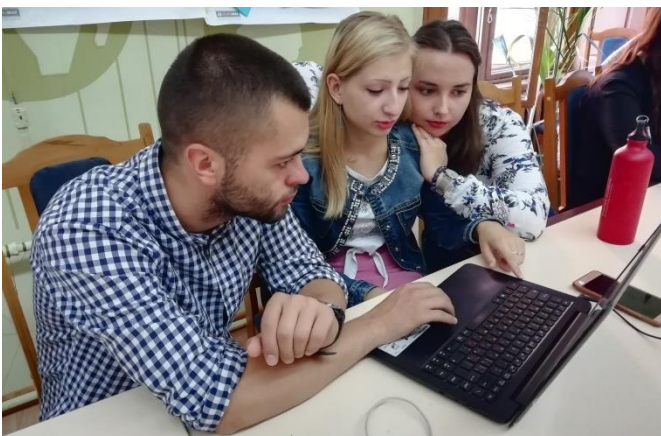
Participants of the Zaporizhzhia summer school on the river island of Khortytsia



Teamwork: writing a video script at the Sumy summer school



Representatives of the Chernivtsi summer school in the morning show of UA: Bukovyna TV Channel



Trainer Dmytro Bondar helping the participants with the video editing in the Chernivtsi summer school



Going on a study visit to Sumy Public Broadcasting Company



Going on a spree with new friends after classes of the Poltava summer school



Participants of the Sumy summer school exploring the hosting city on a hot day in July

Summer Schools: Testimonies from our Participants

"Ten days around journalism"

Daria Nahorna, 19, Ivano-Frankivsk

To tell the truth, knowing the low-level of Journalism Faculty at Ukrainian universities, I expected something similar from this school and it frightened me. On the first day, we were asked to share our fears and one of the most common fears was: "I am afraid I will not learn anything and waste my time here". As it turned out on the last day, this fear did not come true. I personally improved my skills in video editing, studied Excel from square one, learned how to produce infographics and to look for information in registers. Even though the workshop topics were serious, we understood them well. I think this is because the trainers explained the principles giving examples from their own experience. They shared life hacks and secrets of the profession. Yeah, we studied for hours, but the schedule did not exhaust us. We could have some rest during the coffee time and in the evening we explored the streets of Chernivtsi. We felt cozy all the 10 days. The "Summer School for Young Journalists" did not make us just the 'viewers', it took us 'behind the scenes' to give a different perspective of the 'stage' that is going to be ours soon.



Daria Nahorna (right) at group work

Alla Pavlutska
August 20 · 🌐

We had an unforgettable summer together with these people. We met just 10 days ago, but I feel like we've known each other for 1000 years. Nobody can imagine how many troubles we came through and how close we became after. We really did a lot of work. What I remember most are how we were taught to write quality texts, work with data and of course work as a team on materials. It was really interesting and I am grateful to our speakers for being able to communicate this information competently. You have done everything to improve our journalist skills. Thank y'all for these days. 😊
#civilsocietycooperation #interlinkacademy



👍❤️ You, Nadiia Babynska Vima, Liubov Vasylyk and 17 others

"My best memories this summer"

Tetiana Ivah, 19, Poltava

Once I got a letter that I got a grant to study in the "Summer School for Young Journalists" 💎. At that moment I could not even imagine that over these ten days my outlook would change. And the phrase "I have no time for ..." is the driving force to fight my inner fears and try something new and interesting. Over these days I had managed to learn how to: 1) send requests; 2) prepare reportages; 3) make good photos; 4) navigate Poltava and its historical sites thanks to city quest.



Tetiana Ivah (left)

I also met very smart, experienced and bright trainers, got acquainted with creative, energetic, clever young journalists and worked on the project till the sunrise 🌅. And the most important are the emotions that cannot be expressed in words. I wish everybody development and inspiration. Enjoy the job you are doing ❤️ Interlink Academy is forever in my heart ❤️

"Between Bachelor and Master I keep studying"

Anton Lytvynenko, 23, Zaporizhzhia

In mid-summer 2019, Zaporizhzhia hosted an interesting event – "Summer School for Young Journalists". Students of different majors from all over Ukraine came here to learn the basics of journalism. The organizers ensured high-quality lectures from top Ukrainian experts. To master the theoretical knowledge we had to do practical tasks that we carried out enthusiastically as it was in different locations – during a boat trip around the picturesque Khortytsia or on-campus of Zaporizhzhia National University. The excursion to the TV channel turned into an interesting adventure both for the experienced journalists and beginners. Here, we improved skills in photo and video editing, filming, and text writing. In the end, we produced our own media projects. The summer school helped us learn more about journalism and acquire skills to work as a journalist.



Anton Lytvynenko (left)

Summer Schools: Testimonies from our Participants

"Useful, cool, and crazy days of summer"

Illia Rudkov, 18, Zaporizhzhia



Illia Rudkov (right)

Well... I seem to just have passed my June exams, but the autumn is already here. And probably the only bright memory that I had this summer is the "Summer School for Young Journalists" that I was lucky to join.

What can I say about the School? Firstly, though we had some theory, it gave practical knowledge.

It was quite interesting to look into the job of journalists' from a different angle. The way we were running, trying to get bits of information from people, exhausted us and filled with enthusiasm at the same time.

This school gave me a bunch of new ideas for projects. While working over them, we came up with new more creative ideas that we will work on in the future.

And, what's most important, the school gave me a ton of memories and a bunch of friends whom I already miss and whom I will definitely visit in the future. Though the school was held in Zaporizhzhia, not far from my home town, we had participants from all over Ukraine. We did our best to know each other and we made friends. We had energizers and played board games in the evening which charged us physically and mentally, and we had the laugh of our time. All these 24 people made the school so cool that one can hardly believe that a project is able to achieve so much.

But this school would not have happened without our trainers Volodymyr Torbich, Artem Babak and Oksana Stavniichuk and organizers Oleksandra Golovko and Werner Eggert.

After all, the school seems Baum's fairy tale "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" where you find yourself in an unknown place, meet a bunch of new friends, spend all your time together, learn the world and then you go home and miss those whom you met on the yellow brick road. It seems like a dream... A useful, cool, crazy, fast and so heart-warming 10-day dream that will give you its best and brighten your summer.

"My summer was spared for learning!"

Nataliya Humenna, 19, Vinnytsia

I am very happy that I learned about Interlink and applied for the "Summer School for Young Journalists", got the grant and came to Poltava.

I had 10 fruitful and unforgettable days that were made possible thanks to wonderful organizers, cool trainers and unbelievable people around.

Personally I tried to get the maximum and learned a lot of new things. It cannot be the other way round if the information is presented in an interesting way and everyone has to practice to master the skill. I liked that the trainers tried different ways for us to understand the information, supported and helped us, and analyzed everybody's mistakes. It was clear that they really wanted to teach their students.

The organizers cared for each of us and it was very nice! They cared for everyone to have everything!

I am very grateful to Interlink Academy!



Nataliya Humenna

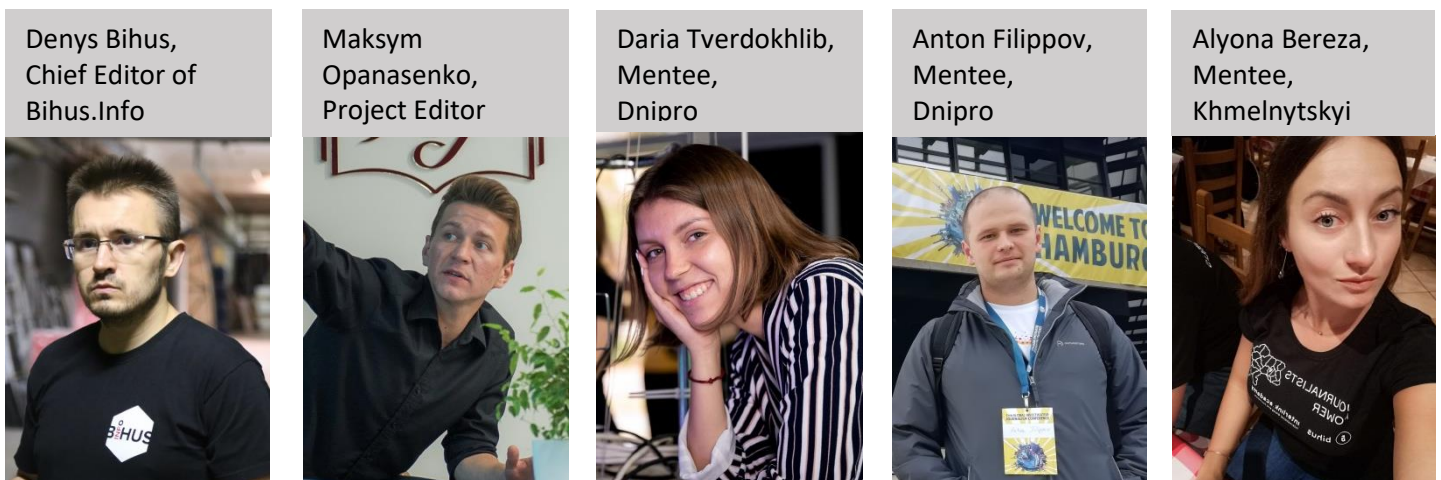


Ruslana Dzyuba's article in "The Poltavskyi Visnyk" about her participation in the Poltava summer school

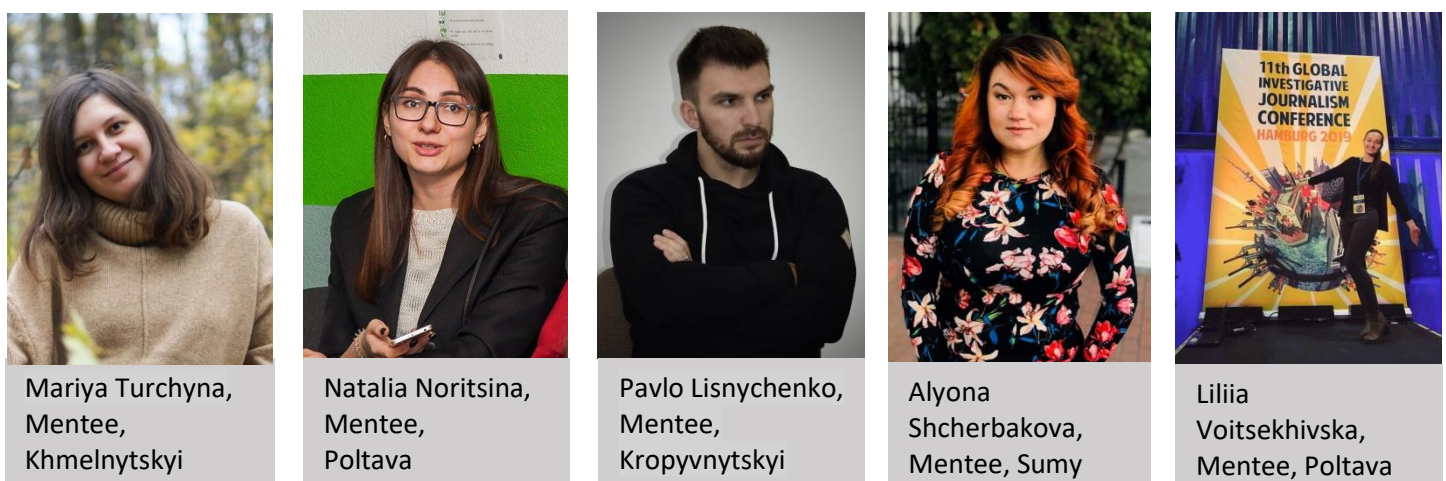
Laboratory of Exposure: Coaching Investigative Journalists in Ukraine

Denys Bihus, Project Leader and Chief Editor of Bihus.Info: The project 'Laboratory of Exposure' was kicked off as a partnership between Interlink Academy and Bihus.Info / Book14. The idea behind the project is to empower regional investigative journalists in Ukraine by giving an opportunity to selected young and promising journalists to work in their communities under the Book14's experienced mentorship. The main criterion was the previous experience in journalism and investigations, but the regional factor was also important as in the project we tried to cover as many regions as possible.

The project team selected 8 journalists from Kropyvnytskyi, Khmelnytskyi, Dnipro, Poltava, and Sumy regions. As of today, the 8 selected participants of the 'Laboratory of Exposure' have carried out and published **54 journalistic investigative articles** and **4 investigative video reports**.



Team of investigative journalists from Ukraine: mentors and mentees



However, the biggest achievement of the project was neither the improved skills and knowledge nor the investigation feedbacks. The biggest achievement of the project is the established regional network that includes regional journalists and local media lawyers as well as the international contacts gained at the GIJC 2019. Thanks to the regional lawyers, the mentees are now able to effectively defend themselves from threats of lawsuits and legal attacks as well as prevent them by having their materials examined from a legal standpoint prior to publication. This network will further contribute to the knowledge sharing with regional journalists, by decreasing their isolation from one another and having a more profound impact on their communities.



Federal Foreign Office



bihus

Laboratory of Exposure: Visiting the Global Investigative Journalism Conference

Oksana Bizenkova, Executive Director of Bihus.Info, talked to the mentees who traveled to Hamburg to participate in the Global Investigative Journalism Conference as part of their internship. This is what they said about their expectation, experiences, international exposure, and expanded network.

Thanks to the Interlink's support, interns from the "Exposure Laboratory" project, as well as their mentors from the Bihus.Info Anti-Corruption Team, attended GIJC19. They came for new knowledge, networking, and best practice training for investigators from all around the world. From Hamburg, they traveled home enriched with new ideas, friends, tips, tricks, and dreams about new projects in their hometowns of Ukraine.



Mentees' expectations

Nataliya Noritsina, a mentee from Poltava: "I really want to bring something useful back to my city: new connections, contacts, materials. And to share them with colleagues."

Pavlo Lisnychenko, a mentee from Kropyvnytsky: "The main things are exchange and connections because networking is the coolest thing about this."

Daryna Tverdokhlib, a mentee from Dnipro: "Though it is my first time abroad and I do not feel very sure of my English skills, I hope I'll understand everything and absorb the maximum of useful information."

Looking back we can say that everyone did well with networking, English, and tools. The Exposure Laboratory interns even produced their own rating of usefulness to share with their colleagues in Ukraine.

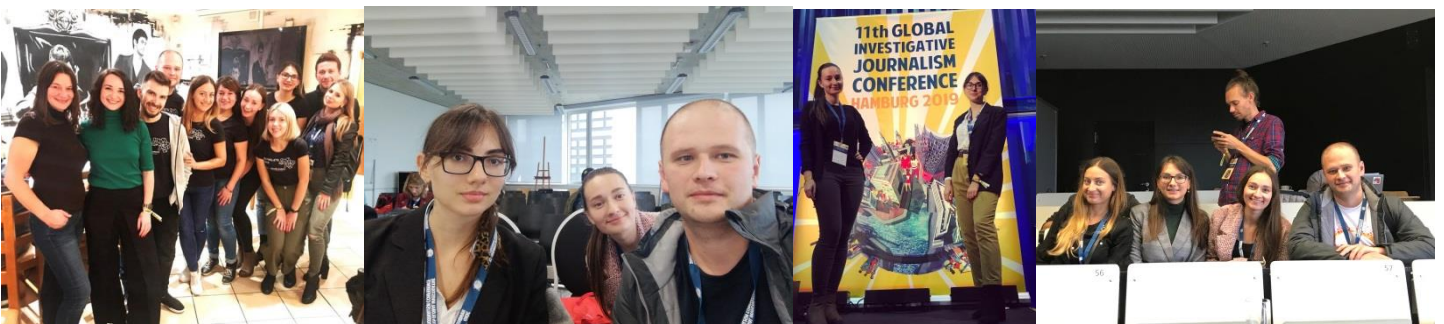
Bihus.Info team views

Maksym Opanasenko, Bihus.Info editor: "If I had to describe the Exposure Lab in one word, it would be "synergy". In this project, we don't just develop the skills of regional investigative journalists but contribute to activities and cross-regional support. They see how it works with others and feel that they are not alone. For us at Bihus.Info, it is a cool experience as when you share knowledge, you also learn to look at things from a different angle."



Words of gratitude

On the way home, carrying new plans, ideas, and dreams, Bihus.Info interns shared their impressions: "At the Global Shining Light Awards, we all saw what to strive for. It is extremely motivating to develop oneself, to use all this knowledge we have gained in 5 days. To boldly move forward because we can really do it all in Ukraine. Thank you, Interlink Academy, for supporting Ukrainian journalism."



Investigative journalists from the 'Laboratory of Exposure' at the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Hamburg

Laboratory of Exposure: My Life as an Investigative Journalist in the Regions

"Challenge accepted!"

Pavlo Lisnychenko, mentee from Kropyvnytskyi

The work of an investigative journalist is always a venture. I am not speaking about physical threats or attempts to hack gadgets or accounts. There's enough of that, but this is not the main danger. You may just not be heard, or worse, without a proper pre-publication and proofreading, your material may be bugged, have wrong conclusions, or contain unverified facts. And then all your work and time spent will be in vain. Mistakes for an investigator can result in a loss of the audience's trust and devaluation of our work.

That is why the participation in this project is an opportunity to expand the number of professional "looks from the outside", to hear professional comments and remarks, to refine the text in the direction in which you wouldn't have thought of yourself. In addition, of course, you need to develop and move to a new level of recognition. And finally, it is an opportunity to "highlight" the top corrupt officials and the schemes typical in the region.

The collection of facts does not equal a professional journalistic investigation and versatile material preparation. This is the baggage of knowledge/advice/remarks that journalists and editors from Bihus.Info provide to the participants of the "Laboratory of Exposure".



Pavlo Lisnychenko working on the case, Kropyvnytskyi

"By supporting each other, you can achieve much more than alone"

Daryna Tverdokhlib, mentee from Dnipro



Daryna Tverdokhlib (left) at "Anti-Corruption Capital" Forum, Dnipro

After six months of the "Laboratory of Exposure", I can surely say I have increased my professional level as an investigative journalist. I have gained tremendous knowledge, from tips and case studies in processing large databases, analyzing public information, working with sources and finding information, to tips on topic relevance, material structure, and storytelling. Comprehensive methodological, editorial and informational support of the mentor helped my investigations become better and more interesting. We have also started filming an investigation, which is a cool new experience. Over this time, we, the eight interns and our mentor have become a real team. We have grown into a community of investigative journalists with the common goal of corruption exposure.

"We concentrated on elections"

Mariya Turchyna and Aliona Bereza, mentees from Khmelnytskyi

We have been in the project since May and have produced 13 investigative materials including 5 articles on elections. After the elections, we monitored how the new MPs and political parties abode by the law and accounted for the funds spent on their campaigns.

Following our investigation "Humanitarian luxury — a car without customs clearance for the chosen ones", the Bureau of Investigations in Khmelnytskyi region started criminal proceedings on "Abuse of power".

Thanks to the mentor's professional support, we have mastered the basics of writing concise texts with the focus on details. Our materials mostly concentrate on the city of Khmelnytskyi, but this does not mean that there is lower corruption in the region and it does not need investigating. We did travel to the region to investigate some cases.

Given that there are no investigative teams at our regional level, this project is like a breath of fresh air for the people of Khmelnytskyi region and it causes much inconvenience to the local corrupt officials.



Mariya Turchyna (left) and Aliona Bereza (right) on the steps of the Prosecution Office, Khmelnytskyi



Interlink Fellows at the Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Hamburg

Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Hamburg: 1700 Reporters and Editors from around the World

Hamburg became the global center of investigative journalism in September. The Global Investigative Journalism Network had chosen the German media hub to host the 11th Global Investigative Journalism Conference (GIJC19).

Interlink Academy was one of the organizers of the four-day conference, together with the Global Investigative Journalism Network and Netzwerk Recherche. More than 1,700 professional journalists from all over the world attended the international event on the premises of HafenCity University and DER SPIEGEL. Here, they had an opportunity to meet colleagues, network, learn about the journalistic investigations worldwide, participate in over 250 workshops, and attend the GIJC19 Award Ceremony. The GIJC takes place every two years.



Werner Eggert with Fang Yongbin and Rehab Abdelmohsen at the GIJC19 Award Ceremony



Interlink Fellows, invited with the assistance of the German Foreign Ministry, gathering before the conference launch

My GIJC19 Experience: Interlink Fellows Reporting Back

“Quenching my thirst for investigations”

Lae Lae Thinn, Myanmar, Interlink Fellow to GIJC19

11th Global Investigative Journalism Conference was really inspiring and allowed us to get a complex insight into the current global situation. It was great to see 1,700 journalists from 130 countries at GIJC19 in Hamburg. There were also about 250 panels, workshops, and special events.

GIJC19 was the event of an enormous scale and capacity, what is more, it offered a rich variety of training sessions. Think of it as a giant buffet, not a sit-down dinner. This worked absolutely right for me. At this giant buffet, I picked up the foods that I liked. Everything that I saw looked inviting and delicious. After the conference, I felt I had learnt the best “foods, ingredients, sauces and cooking techniques” for my own investigative stories.

GIJC19 was the largest and most diverse gathering of investigative journalists I have ever attended. This was my first experience of such an event and it was a perfect place to be inspired. The most interesting topics for me are climate change and environmental issues, data journalism, online investigations, online research, verification and fact-checking. Here, I quenched my thirst for these topics.

The climate change issue is the most important issue on Planet Earth in 2019. In Hamburg, we discussed the current situations in different parts of the world as well as how investigative journalists should report about such issues.

Environmental crime and wildlife smuggling are urgent environmental problems in Myanmar. Ying Chan of the new Pangolin Projects announced the results of their international team (ten countries including Myanmar) and explained how they investigated it and collaborated with the local journalists. I have learned about the new tools for data journalism which is a part of the investigation story. Data journalism is always changing, I have also changed and upgraded my data journalism knowledge and skills.

The section on online research for investigation taught me how to choose essential tools from the investigative journalist toolkit. Social media is also a good deposit of information for investigations. I have learned new and effective online information research techniques and advanced Google search for investigations. I am a way more skilful how to track and investigate, check news, photos, and video by using geolocation.

Thanks for inviting me to join this inspiring conference. GIJC19 is the best conference I have ever attended. I really appreciate it and want to express my sincere gratitude for the well-organized and well-prepared event as well as the personal support. I will definitely apply the knowledge that I learned at this conference. It was good to see the best journalists from all over the world and I hope to join such conferences in the future.



Lae Lae Thinn, Myanmar

“How to empower journalists”

Nadiia Babynska, Interlink Fellow to GIJC19

This conference is about people who dedicate their lives to journalism, who are eager to take risks to deliver and disseminate the truth. This conference is about networking and empowerment, about friendship and understanding diversity. This conference widens your mindset and provides you with new ideas to be implemented, new people to help, new opportunities. I am very glad to be a part of this power, to find new people, to create something good, and to get new knowledge I can use to change.



Nadiia Babynska, Ukraine

My GIJC19 Experience: Interlink Fellows Reporting Back

“One cannot be everywhere at once”

Clayton Moyo, Interlink Fellow to GIJC19

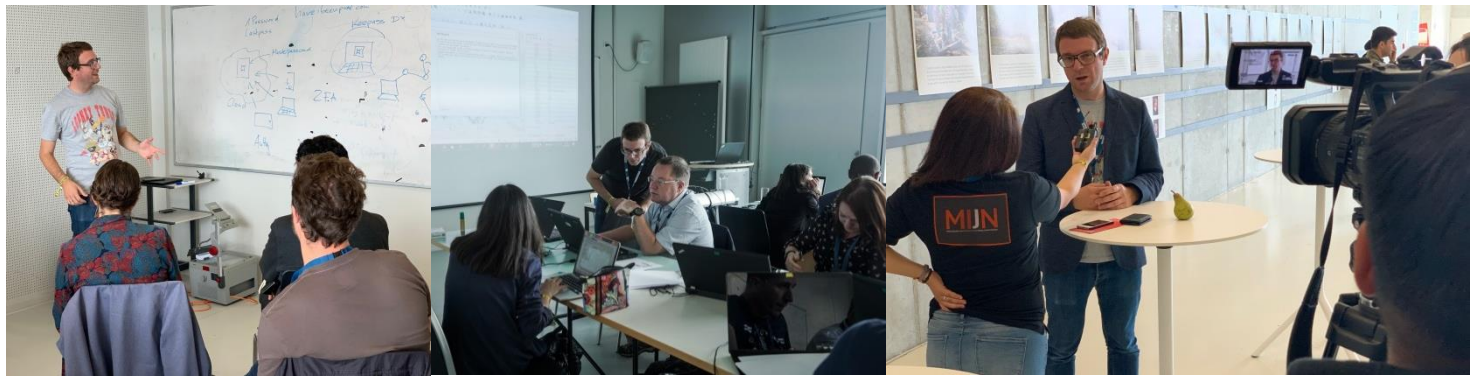


Clayton Moyo, Zimbabwe

What you may not know about the Global Investigative Journalism Conference particularly as a first-timer is that it is bigger than you can possibly imagine. This dawned on me as I was sitting at Tambo International Airport in South Africa waiting for a connecting flight to Hamburg, Germany.

I had been too busy in the past few days to check the conference app for agenda updates. Some conference sessions had been added. I wanted to attend all of them. But they gave parallel sessions here. You couldn't hug and hoard everything on your itinerary.

With over 1700 investigative journalists from 130 countries, the 11th Global Investigative Journalism Conference 2019 convened the finest and the most resilient and innovative journalists and media trainers. The issues covered were as vast as the experiences of journalists in that gathering.



Interlink's **Claus Hesselning** giving digital security workshops (left, center) and being interviewed by a Mongolian TV group (right)

“Investigating and reporting on environmental issues”

Aye Aye Zin, Interlink Fellow to GIJC19

This is the first time I have attended the Global Investigative Journalism Conference. I am a media trainer from Myanmar and I specialize in environmental reporting.

There were many panel discussions related to environmental issues, climate change reporting, illegal cross border animal trade. I had chances to learn how to deeper investigate environmental issues.

Another interesting topic is using AI to investigate environmental cases. One panel discussion was about investigating forced animals serving for tourism reasons. Investigators use AI, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pictures to track the cases. This is a very useful technique for investigative reporting in my country. I learned that newsrooms face many challenges to investigate budgets, security issues, AI, etc.

I also got acquainted with the Hafen city, Hamburg and the local culture. That gave me an idea of how to build a sustainable and environmental city plan.

I will use this experience in my work, at my institute. I will share it with my colleagues and trainees. There are many issues to investigate in Myanmar.



Aye Aye Zin, Myanmar



GIJC19 Milestones and People in Pictures



Conference statement for press freedom at the Award Ceremony



Members of the conference Organizing Committee at the end of the conference



Interlink's Andrea Kambergs (right) and Ada von der Decken welcoming conference journalists



Five minutes before the official conference opening: we are ready



Interlink's workshop with Jakob Vicari and Astrid Csuraji



Interlink's Werner Eggert at the panel on media development



Discussion related to the press freedom awareness campaign by the City of Hamburg



The press freedom campaign launch organized by the City of Hamburg



The course is done: ready to move forward

Zambia and Zimbabwe: Strengthening Investigative Research and Fact-Checking Skills of Independent Journalists

This is a fact-checking course for journalists intending to improve networks and cross-border cooperation between Zambia and Zimbabwe. **Clayton Moyo**, media trainer with Interlink's partner CITE, shared his views on the course.

This year, the Centre for Innovation Technology (CITE) and Interlink Academy were conducting a fact-checking and verification training workshop in Zimbabwe. A similar workshop was also taking place in the neighboring Zambia where Interlink partnered with NewsDiggers, a newspaper startup.

Local newsrooms need such initiatives and their own fact-checkers. The media cannot afford to be mediocre and as vulnerable to hoaxes as an average social media consumer.

This is why the social media focus in the training program is of the utmost importance. There has been an influence of social media on news coverage in Zimbabwe. Twitter and Facebook conversations shape much of the newspaper content. Here lies the danger.

The lead trainer Marcus Lindemann introduced participants to open source intelligence that is deployed in journalistic work. Participants have to put in more effort into using open source tools to investigate and verify the information.

We all are quite familiar with Google. The biggest search engine gives us what we are looking for because information search is quite straightforward, or so we think. If you don't know the useful Google operators, searching the web can be a wild goose chase. The web is vast.



Discussion with Achim Burkart, the German Ambassador to Zambia, featured on the front page of NewsDiggers

Interlink's Course Strengthens the Training Capacity of Media in Zambia and Zimbabwe

Joseph Mwenda, the Managing Director of News Diggers Media Limited, Lusaka, Zambia, is Interlink's Zambian project partner. He writes on the training course we co-organized.

The Interlink's support of the "Fact-checking course" is proof that the journalism curriculum in Zambian colleges and universities is outdated. After being introduced to the digital fact-checking tools, most participants felt their formal college journalism training did not adequately prepare them to practice in the fast-paced digital world influenced by social media.

"These are the things they should have taught us in college," remarked one participant after learning how to analyze and verify fake videos and pictures.

Indeed, most of what is taught to future journalists in Zambian colleges and universities is dry theory. The practical aspects of the courses are shallow with little focus on the evolution of news gathering and digital trends on the news media market.

This is what, with the Interlink's support, "Fact-Checking and Investigative Reporting Course" managed to fix. The designed curriculum is very well structured. As a result, it allows the participants to learn the skills and apply them during the e-learning phase, thereby achieve maximum retention of the knowledge imparted.

What is more? The Interlink's course is not just about exporting an expatriate trainer to teach local journalists, it trains local trainers who can then help structure the course according to the needs of the participating investigative journalists.

This is good because it builds the capacity of local trainers who are then entrusted with the responsibility of implementing future courses without the direct close supervision of foreign trainers.

This is good tailor-made training for journalists in the digital world that every news media practitioner must undergo and experience. Quality journalism needs quality training.



Zambian and Zimbabwean journalists in cross-border exchange on fact-checking and research: learning - working – networking – making friends

Broadening Minds, Improving Skills, Establishing Ties



Zenzele Ndebele and Marcus Lindemann (right) addressing the participants



Trainer Joan Chirwa helping the participant with digital fact-checking tools



Zambian and Zimbabwean journalists working together on verification to improve their skills in investigative journalism

My Experience: Cross-Border Cooperation on the Banks of the Zambezi River

Lungelo Ndhlovu participated in the Interlink's professional development course and writes how it changed his own perspective.

How it All Began

In early September, following my acceptance in the professional research and fact-checking skills program, I had an experience unlike any other in my professional life. It was a workshop conducted at the Centre for Innovation and Technology in Bulawayo.

For four days (09-13 September), I was surrounded by journalist colleagues from various media houses across Zimbabwe, and professional trainers from Interlink Academy who introduced me to fact-checking tools and techniques as well as Moodle which is an e-learning online platform.

Lessons Learnt

Though I was familiar with some online platforms, I wasn't deeply immersed in Moodle which became part of my interesting e-learning process from 16 September to 3 November. This came as a surprise not only for me but also for other participants who used the platform for the first time. With tutelage from skilled trainers, each week, participants received an assignment with a quiz exercise, followed by the trainers' feedback. I found this very interesting and I had a lot of fun despite the internet access challenges.

Livingstone Experience

I love travelling a lot and the program provided me with an opportunity to travel. For the second phase, I found myself in Livingstone surrounded not only by Zimbabwean, but also by also Zambian colleagues.

I managed to network and share some contacts for prospective cross border journalism practice. Overall, the program had a very huge impact on my journalistic work.



Lungelo Ndhlovu, Zimbabwe

Media Literacy in the Villages of Eastern Ukraine



To foster media literacy skills in Eastern Ukraine local activists joined Interlink's train the trainer course on media literacy. Consequently, the participants held dissemination training on media literacy in their communities.

Media literacy is probably one of the most critical competencies that people need in the modern world, especially in the regions neighboring conflict zones or affected by information warfare. This is the thinking behind the project that we implemented in Eastern Ukraine. The project aim was to turn local activists into trainers by introducing them to the principles of media literacy, workshop content development, and interactive teaching techniques.

After the intensive initial training course, the 24 participants returned to their respective communities where each of them had at least 3 dissemination training sessions and shared the knowledge and skills with the local school and university students, neighbors, friends, colleagues and everyone open to new experience and opportunities.

The range of dissemination training varied in content and included such topics as "Media Literacy as a Guideline to Critical Thinking", "Practical Media Literacy", "Media Literacy as an Important Competency of a Modern Citizen", "How to Navigate the Information Flow", "Media Literacy for Educators", "How to Counteract Information Attacks in Today's Media Space", "Is Media Literacy and Important Skill in the 21st Century?"

The local training sessions produced an extensive dissemination campaign and outreached over 1000 beneficiaries in the communities of Zaporizhzhia and Sumy regions. This project was worth the candles, time, and effort. The participants will keep the ball rolling.



Discussing the Ukrainian media landscape during the kick-off meeting in Sumy



Working on the main media literacy concepts in Zaporizhzhia

Media Literacy Training: Passing on the Knowledge

"To be truly literate, you must be literate in the media world"

Tetiana Chorna, participant, Zaporizhzhia region

Media literacy and the ability to think critically in everyday life are the defining competencies of the 21st century. To avoid manipulation, we desperately need to develop these two modern vital skills the Ukrainians are still missing.

I was happy to be a part of this challenging project. No surprise they say: "Seek and you shall find." And I found it!

In September – December 2019, I participated in a training course in Zaporizhzhia on media literacy. Extraordinary creative ideas and charismatic trainers intrigued me and encouraged to work further. Workshops I conducted in my community show the topicality of media education in general, and media literacy in particular.

I am grateful to Interlink and our trainers for the opportunity to join the media literate community. And finally, I fully support the Canadian literary critic Marshall McLuhan, who once said: "To be truly literate, you must be literate in the media world".



Tetiana Chorna holding training for teachers

"Media literacy made me forget my routine"

Kyryl Tarasenko, participant, Zaporizhzhia



Kyryl Tarasenko holding training for military school students

I would like to express my warmest gratitude to the Interlink team for the organization of the training, which was productive, encouraging, broadening and motivating.

I was deeply involved in the process of learning new aspects of media literacy and sharing skills with other participants.

During the project, I was so engaged I could forget about the daily routine and was constantly brainstorming for new ideas and ways of their implementation as the most important and interesting questions and tasks were the focus of our attention.

The atmosphere was nice and cozy and we quickly became friends. I was deeply impressed by the variety of methods and tools our trainers used and all of them proved effective in the teaching process. Moreover, I successfully implement most methods at work with students. Special thanks for it!

The most striking and memorable was the teamwork where we could be more than actors, more than teachers, more than participants. I should say I could feel the atmosphere of the training even during our individual work or while completing tasks. I am eagerly waiting for the final part.

Many thanks and best wishes to Oleksandra Golovko, Katerina Sirinyok-Dolgryova, Erik Albrecht for new knowledge and skills. Thank you, Interlink Academy, German Embassy in Kyiv, and Zaporizhzhia National University, for this project!

"My 2019 buzzword: media literacy"

Tetiana Naumenko, participant, Zaporizhzhia

Interlink, it was amazing! I have never attended such training; still, I have been to a lot of them. I had a great opportunity for four days to get deeper inside the world of media. It was a good chance to know more about different media and their owners, informational flow and informational bubble, fakes, and ways of checking information, content and content creation. I understood the methodology of organizing and conducting training and obtained practical skills. The event would not have been so successful without the organizers, real professionals Oleksandra Golovko, Katerina Sirinyok-Dolgryova, and Erik Albrecht. They managed to create the atmosphere not only for studying but also for communication! They inspired me to develop my own training. I am really looking forward to sharing my experience and feelings. Now I am inspired, open to everything new and ready for further collaboration!



Tetiana Naumenko after her training

Media Literacy Training: Passing on the Knowledge

"How we started leading a safe online life"

Larysa Zhuravel, participant, Sumy region



Larysa Zhuravel

Preparing for the training, I took into account both the demands and age of my audience. Therefore, one of the training modules always concentrated on social networking. The participants discussed how to make your online life meaningful and safe, how to avoid addiction. This topic was controversial and provoked a lively discussion.

The case study methods obtained from the mentors Erik Albrecht, Tatiana Kovalova and Tatiana Mostipan helped me make the training exciting and productive. I was pleasantly surprised by the children's interest in safety issues on social networks. What's more, the participants edited their own profiles and posts on social networks, following the rules of the previously discussed personal information hygiene.

I am convinced that media literacy is important, relevant, and promising.

"Media literacy is for everyone"

Inna Novikova, participant, Sumy region

The first phase began in October 2019 with 4 days of training. We learned the training basics, structure and design, methods and goals, tasks and their formulation, and the theoretical components of media literacy. We discussed manipulation, online threats, high and low-quality content, and many more just in four days.

The second stage was to design and deliver our own training. When I opened the matrix template, I thought it was the end of me. It seemed difficult and incomprehensible, but having read it, I easily developed different sessions for teachers and students.

At first, I had doubts about their implementation, it seemed of no interest to anyone. But I was wrong. The participants so enthusiastically took part in the discussions and different tasks, that all my worries were gone. Now I understand media literacy is important and interesting for different groups of people.

During the third phase, we exchanged our impressions and results, as well as the moments that still require processing.



Inna Novikova



"My enriching co-training experience"

Katerina Sirinyok-Dolgaryova, co-trainer, Zaporizhzhia

Undoubtedly, with this project, my professional horizons are getting broader. It was both challenging and exciting at the same time to train people to be trainers in media literacy. This is very important for Ukraine since the media is mostly non-reliable in our country. Therefore, competent media literacy trainers are very much in demand. Especially in small towns and villages of Zaporizhzhia region, which neighbors the conflict zone of Donbas, where people are under a heavy attack of media manipulations and misinformation.

We had a perfect team of co-trainers! Thank you, Erik and Alesia, for the experience of working in the team. I learned a lot from you too. And of course, thank you, Interlink Academy, for organizing such an important project and letting me be a part of it.



Participants discussing hate speech with Katerina Sirinyok-Dolgaryova

Book Releases in Myanmar: Intercultural Communication and Media Literacy

"When Global Meets Local – How Expatriates can Succeed in Myanmar" by Hana Bui



Werner Eggert moderating the book presentation. He encouraged Hana to write the book and consulted her relating critical things

The book offers a first-time essential guide on how to work well with Burmese people. It assists expatriates in achieving success in Myanmar by helping them overcome the biggest challenge of expats here – the cultural conflicts.

Would you like to read an engaging book that saves hundreds of thousands of dollars? A survey of senior executives from 68 countries indicates that 90% see "cross-cultural leadership" as the biggest management challenge of this century. Up to 40% of managers sent on overseas assignments terminate early. The cost to employers of each early return is between USD 250,000 – 1,250,000. In most cases, the reason is cultural issues rather than professional, technical skills.



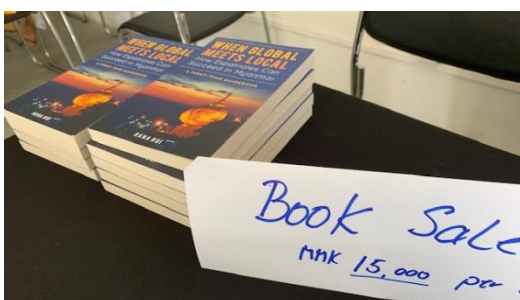
Panel discussion in Yangon

About the author: Hana Bui is an intercultural trainer and author about Myanmar. She was in business for years including 6 years in HR services in Myanmar.

Hana sees herself as a cultural bridge between Myanmar and the world. She has actually developed a strong interest in global-local interrelations since ten years ago when she did an MA degree in Globalization and Communications at the University of Leicester, England.

For writing the book, Hana carried out a survey with over 100 expats who have lived here for over a year, and 50 local professionals who have lots of experience working with expats. Plus she did 30 in-depth interviews with local professionals and expats.

"What Readers Say About the Book?" can be seen on this page, or clicking "Look Inside" <https://www.amazon.com/When-Global-Meets-Local-Expatriates-ebook/dp/B07MXV92W7>



First books sold at a discount



"The Myanmar Times" publishing a review on Hana's book

"Mediactive" by Dan Gillmor translated into the Myanmar language

Interlink's longtime partner and Internet guru Dan Gillmor joined the launch of the published Myanmar edition of his book "Mediactive" at the Myanmar Journalism Institute in Yangon via Skype in November.

Interlink had supported the translation of "Mediactive" into the Ukrainian language before.



Skype session with Dan Gillmor on the book release in November

News from Our Alumni Around the Globe

Thank you so much for the insightful training that improved my life in an amazing way. From the time I completed the Mobile Reporting for community journalists in Zimbabwe, I have been able to get online jobs with video adverts and multimedia stories, it also increased my visibility online and helped me get a job with a media organisation. In my interview for the job, they looked into my online presence and followers. Many thanks to Interlink & CITE. I hope such programs will continue.



Nkosikhona Dibiti,
2018 alumnus from Zimbabwe

Al-Ayyam Center for Cultural Studies and Development is a non-profit organization established from the legacy of the prestigious Al-Ayyam newspaper. Building capabilities and training journalists are basic tasks of the Center.

Our attendance of the Global Investigative Journalism Conference, Hamburg 2019, thanks to Interlink Academy, marked a major shift in the plans of our Al-Ayyam Center towards leadership and specialization in training this type of journalism and tools. As the Sudanese press did not know this type of journalistic work due to the succession of dictatorial governments, generations of journalists worked under conditions of suppression, censorship, intimidation, lack of information and red lines that limit freedom of expression and access to information. This reflected negatively on professional journalistic work.

Now Sudan is witnessing a major transformation to the stage of full democracy after the December-April revolution that brought down the dictatorial regime. The environment is prepared for Al-Ayyam Center to work to raise the capabilities of journalists to play their role to work and participate in the construction phase after the revolution with high professionalism and responsibility. It is now preparing an integrated plan for training in the field of investigative and digital journalism in cooperation with Interlink Academy and other international media institutions.



Sumaya Elmatbagi,
2014 alumna from Sudan

I was recently awarded a Swedish Institute scholarship for studies at the Master's Programme in Global Media Studies at Stockholm University. During the coming two years I will be studying theoretical approaches informing the field, as well as practical research skills for the study of media and communication.

I participated in the Interlink training "Digital Journalism in Eastern Europe" in 2015. The skills that I gained as a result of courses on photography, mobile video reporting, advanced research, and digital security helped me at my work at Hetq – the media outlet of Investigative Journalists and an NGO in Armenia. Later, I tried to further my knowledge in specific aspects of journalism and helped produce educational materials with local non-governmental organizations.

Although my future education and activity are going to differ from the practical journalism I have been doing so far, I am sure that the complex knowledge that I received from the Interlink Academy training will help me further.



Hrant Galstyan,
2015 alumnus from Armenia

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I enjoyed it very much! Wish you luck and inspiration! I have two "bookings" for training in Media Education. Facebook did its work well – colleagues from other schools are also interested! Hope to see you soon!



Svitlana Palienkova (left),
2019 alumna from Ukraine

Thank you for the invaluable experience and unforgettable atmosphere in this incredible workshop.

Looking forward to the next event from Interlink Academy!

Andrii Humennyi,
2018 alumnus from Ukraine



Letter from Our Partner

Gennadii Vasylichuk, vice-rector of Zaporizhzhia National University, has always promoted and supported the cooperation with Interlink Academy. This year, following two projects held at the university, he wrote a letter to us.



Gennadii Vasylichuk welcoming the participants of the project "Media Literacy for the Villages of Eastern Ukraine"

I am writing today to say that Zaporizhzhia National University (Ukraine) was lucky to partner with Interlink Academy in 2016 for our first joint initiative. It was a 'Summer School for Bloggers and Citizen Journalists'. The idea to bring together 24 young activists turned out a success and now four schools are held annually in different cities. But everything began at our university.

This year, our cooperation with Interlink also resulted in a project "Media Literacy for the Villages of Eastern Ukraine." The main idea is to invite participants from small towns and villages of the region. They became agents of change and strengthened the pillars of media literacy in their communities. Both initiatives are important for our region as we literally border on propaganda, misinformation, and powerful information warfare.

Consequently, the skills of media literacy, fake recognition, critical thinking are a must for the formation of broad-minded citizens, civil society and Ukraine's successful European integration.

Our university hopes our cooperation will bring more fruit in the future. On our behalf, Zaporizhzhia National University will be happy to provide our support and host future initiatives that will contribute to civil society in Ukraine.

Outlook

Interlink's cooperation with Ukraine and Zaporizhzhia National University, in particular, has got a new dimension. For the next 3 years, we will be among 14 partners collaborating to build capacity in Ukraine's higher education under the umbrella of Erasmus+ KA2 programme. One of the aims of the project is to develop and launch the course of Media Literacy in Ukrainian universities. The course will consequently promote healthier media consumption, better critical thinking skills, a more democratic community, and civil society cooperation. We are looking forward to this collaboration in the field of Ukrainian tertiary education.



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