

Abstract

This dissertation connects theories and notions of media and democracy, oligarchization of media, media capture, and media systems with the economic theory of competition law. Slovak and Czech media laws are analyzed in a comparative legal analysis. Pluralism as the core value in all of the above-mentioned theories is researched. Novel historical periodization of the 1989 – 2020 era is proposed, as these 30 years are framed as a permanent transition of the media system of three distinct types. The Herfindahl-Hirschman index proves that the Slovak and Czech media markets are concentrated or oligopolistic, and this trend was strengthened in the last decade of the examined era. The new tool, the Power of Media Owners (POMO) indicator, is invented to show the strength of media oligarchs across platforms. This proves inefficacy of the cross-media ownership regulations, and it is used to measure the level of media capture. Fourth model of media systems, the non-pluralist authoritarian Eastern Oligarchic Captured model is described and the situation in Slovakia and Czech Republic is compared to it, concluding that both examined countries are in fact closer to more established Polarized Pluralist Mediterranean model, which is framed as a half-way to the Eastern model. Conclusions reveal which changes in law (or their absence) are causing the move of the countries towards more media capture. The normative part of the conclusions ('Media Reform') recommends specific policy steps to prevent this type of backsliding into more authoritarian models.