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## POPULIST DISCOURSES ABOUT JOURNALISM IN LITHUANIA: SOURCES, CHANNELS, AND MESSAGES

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### Abstract

The rise of social media has significantly impacted journalists, journalism, and the public trust in the media. On the one hand, it has given more power to the public to demand media accountability; on the other hand, it has enforced highly biased discursive strategies aimed at engaging audiences of populist social media actors and channels.

Attacks on independent news media in a populist manner, their accusation of disseminating so-called 'fake news' and allegations of their dependence on the state and the corporate world have become attractive to some voters, eventually leading certain political actors to the positions of power. This shift signifies a drift from democracy, where independent media plays a major role, towards authoritarianism.

In Lithuania, however, the majority of populist strategic media attacks occur at the outskirts of the national and regional media landscape. Nonetheless, attempts to undermine the media credibility are constant, and it is only a matter of political constellations as to when these ideas might be enforced on a broader scale.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to map the most active sources, channels, and messages operating in populist communication about journalism and media in Lithuania. The main result of this presentation will be a discourse analysis of such YouTube channels as Op TV and Komentaras TV, as well as an examination of the populist communication tendencies about news media in the discourse of politicians.

### Biography of the presenter

DŽINA DONAUSKAITĖ (PhD) is a journalist, media researcher, and the head of the Lithuanian Journalism Center. She works at the Faculty of Communication at Vilnius University and conducts research on the media landscape of the Baltic countries. Her particular focus is on the impact of global platforms such as Google and Facebook on journalism.