

Report on the outcomes of a Short-Term Scientific Mission¹

Action number: CA21129

Grantee name: Dr. Aleksandra Krstić, University of Belgrade

Details of the STSM

Title: **Sociotechnical construction and expression of politicians' opinions on the topic of migration**

Start and end date: **14/04/2024 to 19/04/2024**

Description of the work carried out during the STSM

This STSM allowed me to work with colleagues from the WG1 and WG2 of the COST Action OPINION on our ongoing study “Sociotechnical construction and expression of politicians’ opinions on the topic of migration“. We discussed the process of data collection and automated data analysis, which was essential to detect errors in the dataset and to try to encounter all the problems with the data collected during the previous phase of the project.

We tested the methodology and particularly paid attention to the scope of our project and decided to extend the analysis to other topics being covered in politicians’ social media accounts, not only migration. We tested some data and gathered useful graphs through automated analysis – we focused on one MEP’s opinions over a year, looked through everything posted and linked posts on different platforms and ran it through the analysis.

The pilot analysis showed we had a lot of problems with data scraping, so we tried to solve problems encountered on Instagram and Twitter. We had to collect some of the data manually to be able to do automated analysis again. We collected the list of problems encountered and sent them to the Cyprus University team to fix the scraping in the upcoming period. The analysis also provided us the opportunity to discuss the method, so we decided to also look at the prominent words, how and what MEPs and MPs post across platforms, if they express emotions, is the language descriptive of mobilizing, do they use emojis, pictures, etc. We tested the influence of platform and discussed about professional role performances in MEPs and MPs expression of opinions in their visual communication. We developed codes for automated coding for posted pictures and got valid results in this area (e.g. private or professional, with more in detail codes for images’ analysis). We also tested cosine and Jaccard similarities to

¹ This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

determine which posts are the same, and then we discussed the advantages and problems of both methods regarding our project.

Description of the STSM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

The main achievement of this STSM is that it allowed me, as a Team Leader of this study, and my colleagues from WG1 and WG2 to clean the data, build new methods for automated data analysis, detect the main problems with the dataset and propose solutions of how to solve the problems so that our future research can continue smoothly. The visit to VU was essential because tested new avenues of our research and discussed different approaches of how to better deal with possible errors in different languages and topics in the future.

I am grateful for the opportunity to work with my co-leader of the team, prof. Dimitra Milioni from the Cyprus University of Technology, and experienced colleagues from the WG2 at the Vrije University in Amsterdam, Damian Trilling, Johannes Gruber, and Srdjan Vesic from the Lille University, who greatly helped our project. This STSM opportunity was used for the overall project coordination and to set up the plan of how we should proceed with the project in the most effective and efficient way. Therefore, we plan the follow-up activities: scraper improvement, data collection on small sample to be sent to VU for testing, if approved then we proceed with new scraping and automated data analysis based on the new codes and analysis conducted during STSM. We plan to present the state-of-the-art of the project and discuss future plans with the rest of the team during the cross-collaboration slot in Salamanca in June 2024.