



Workshop Salzburg

Interviews with political decision makers  
Expert interviews

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- Project on „Media Policy in Times of Crises“
- International comparative setting (7 countries)
- Austria, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, UK
- Governance approach
  
- Interviews with several stakeholder categories
  - political elites (MPs, government)
  - regulatory authorities
  - industry representatives (PSB, private)
  - civil society organizations

# How to find potential interviewees?

- The relevant organization(s) have to be identified → look for suitable persons within these organizations
- desk research
- expertise/recommendations from colleagues/other experts in the field

# How to contact potential interviewees?

- desk research (websites, Google Search, professional networks)
- expertise/recommendations from colleagues/other experts in the field
- E-Mail, Phone
- If successful, make clear, that the project is a serious one (explain background, involved persons, project aims...)
- Be flexible in timing and arranging an interview schedule (mind holiday times, especially in other countries)
- Different cultures for communication; Europe → mostly E-Mail; North America → more responses by Phone

# The interview – Do and don't

- Do
  - explain background
  - agree on time for interview
  - explain how the output is going to be processed (anonymity, quotes etc.)
  - be prepared! know the background of the interviewee/the organization (a short dossier on the person/organization is really useful)
  - prepare equipment (audio recorder, camera etc.)
- Don't
  - know your interviewee
  - try to make the interview with an equal number of persons (interviewers vs. interviewees)
  - do not depart from the time schedule
  - mention things you have no expertise about

# The interview – different stakeholders (1)

- Political elites
  - open to academics
  - like to talk
  - majority has less expertise about regulatory affairs
  - you have to break the „barrier of the secretary“
  - tend to ask you for your questionnaire in advance
- Regulatory authorities
  - usually high amount of expertise
  - open to academics and mostly familiar with academic research processes
  - accountable
  - easy to contact and arrange meetings

# The interview – different stakeholders (2)

- Industry representatives
  - know „their“ business
  - you have to break the „barrier of practical knowledge“
  - interaction industry vs. academics – seeking for benefits on both sides
  - probably the hardest group of stakeholders to get in touch with
- Civil society organizations
  - „honoured“ to be part of research
  - like to talk
  - normally quite easy to get in touch
  - recommendations by others often useful