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Russia Today's Global Information Strategy

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Workshop II

HS 18

17.10.2018 | 12.15–13.45 Uhr | KOL-F-123
Uni Zürich | Kollegengebäude | Rämistrasse 71

Many countries now operate state-funded international broadcasters, communicating directly with foreign publics to promote a variety of foreign policy goals. RT (formerly known as Russia Today) is currently one of the most prominent broadcasters in a crowded field. What do we know about RT's strategy, the size of its audience, and the effectiveness of its broadcasts in implementing its strategy? To answer these questions, we explore a case study of RT's YouTube programming utilizing a new dataset of 70,272 video titles spanning the two years from February 2015 through January 2017. RT's strategy focuses attention on strategic groups, including Arabic, Russian, and Spanish speakers. It seeks to circumvent local media in the target countries and spread a positive image of Russian accomplishments, particularly in Syria, which it considers a foreign policy success. The data presented here show that RT's strategy is only partially successful since it underperforms among Arabic speakers, its main target, while overperforming among Russian, global English, and Spanish audiences.

Studierende und Interessierte sind herzlich eingeladen.

Um Anmeldung wird gebeten: cees@hist.uzh.ch