

convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe



Focus on

Challenges for Government Communication: managing changes and re-shaping cooperation

- Public communication vs. political communication
- Sharing relevant trends in web communication
- European elections 2014 information campaign
 - Reforming state communication
 - Interdependence



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J'ai deux nouvelles, une bonne et une mauvaise... Je commence par laquelle ?

Philippe Caroyez & Vincenzo Le Voci
secrétaires de la revue

La Commission annonce qu'elle met fin aux partenariats de gestion...

Notre précédent numéro était principalement consacré aux «partenariats» liant la Commission européenne et nombre d'Etats-membres, dans un cadre réglementé, pour la réalisation concertée et conjointe d'actions de communication sur des thématiques prioritaires.

A la suite de la dernière réunion de l'atelier sur ces partenariats, organisé par le Club avec les collègues autrichiens à Vienne, nous donnions place aux réalisations des uns et des autres et faisons écho aux évaluations extrêmement positives que faisaient les Etats-membres et la Commission ; tous se fondant sur les rapports imposés après trois ans et nécessairement réalisés par des firmes ou institutions indépendantes.

Dans ces pages, nous avons montré le rôle important joué par le Club et ses membres pour soutenir la mise en place de ces partenariats et pour en faire tant la promotion (vers d'autres Etats-membres non encore signataires d'un partenariat) que l'enrichissement par l'échange de bonnes pratiques, la coopération entre services nationaux et la poursuite d'une réflexion visant à améliorer le dispositif et les procédures.

Nous avons aussi montré, et c'est l'essentiel, tout l'intérêt de ces partenariats et de la dynamique spécifique qu'ils génèrent, faisant – au plan national, mais au regard des thématiques prioritaires interinstitutionnelles – coopérer un Etat-membre, la représentation dans le pays de la Commission et le bureau du Parlement européen. Le tout se réalisant dans un «esprit neuf» qui, dans le champ habituel des actions de communication publique, a porté à explorer et à exploiter des champs finalement peu sollicités, comme : les publics très jeunes (6+ et 12+), les activités ludo-pédagogiques, le débat public, le recours à l'histoire, l'illustration des valeurs fondamentales (fondatrices?) et la recherche d'une adhésion et quelques coopérations multilatérales (par l'exploitation au bénéfice de plusieurs Etats des droits acquis par l'un d'eux).

Confiants donc, nous saluons le renouvellement des partenariats pour quatre nouvelles années et osons même revendiquer l'augmentation des budgets pour servir des programmes plus larges et plus ambitieux de communication conjointe menée avec l'ensemble des Etats-membres, voire avec les pays candidats et adhérents.

Dans ces conditions, c'est avec consternation et incrédulité que les partenaires ont appris que la Commission – pour des raisons budgétaires – prenait la décision de mettre fin aux partenariats au-delà du 31 décembre 2013.

Outre les raisons budgétaires invoquées (et quelques difficultés jamais relevées jusqu'alors dans les évaluations transversales et les réunions de contact), au regard des autres activités également visées, on peut faire le constat d'une forme de recentrage par l'abandon d'actions déléguées... nous ramenant ainsi à une période antérieure au «plan D».

D'abord au cours de la période préparatoire à l'introduction de l'euro (sous la forme de «memorandum of understanding»), ensuite dans le cadre du «plan D» de relance de la communication publique européenne par la Commissaire Wallström, les partenariats ont pourtant montré leur efficacité et donc leur nécessité.

C'est pour nous une évidence d'agir ainsi conjointement, pour faire en sorte que les actions d'information sur l'Europe et ses priorités répondent au mieux aux attentes des citoyens et soient diffusées de la manière la plus appropriée.

Les évaluations faites des partenariats, menées par des opérateurs neutres, confirment cette position en montrant les résultats satisfaisants des actions entreprises et les bénéfiques d'une coopération entre les représentations des institutions européennes et les autorités publiques nationales.

Au-delà même des actions réalisées dans ce cadre, c'est donc aussi la dynamique «tripartite» mise en place qu'il faut souligner comme apport important des partenariats. Une telle coopération, dans un cadre normé et menée de manière régulière («obligée») et suivie, avec des plans annuels de communication et une approche stratégique pluriannuelle, n'existait pas et n'existe pas en dehors du «système de partenariat» !

La disparition d'un tel cadre fait donc courir le risque de voir disparaître cette dynamique et cette stratégie de coopération permanente. Et il n'est pas acquis – ni garanti – que les coopérations ad hoc, ponctuelles, que la Commission évoque puissent maintenir une telle dynamique.

Il faut d'abord souligner que ces formes alternatives ne sont pas précisées par la Commission, à l'heure actuelle, autrement que comme des possibilités de coopération ponctuelle, sans autres précisions.

En terme d'organisation, un désavantage certain peut être le coup par coup, voire l'existence de plusieurs cadres réglementaires ou programmatiques (selon les activités envisagées et/ou les thèmes abordés).

En terme d'efficacité ou d'efficience, comme indiqué, on peut craindre la disparition ou l'amoindrissement de la dynamique qui s'était progressivement installée et qui imposait une coopération suivie, avec des plans annuels de communication et une nécessaire approche stratégique pluriannuelle.

Il appartiendra aux membres du Club de s'impliquer, comme ils l'ont fait jusqu'à présent, pour que la dynamique ne s'appauvrisse pas et pour que les expériences nationales soient partagées au bénéfice de la diffusion des «bonnes pratiques». Il faudra aussi faire corps pour que des moyens soient maintenus et que les actions mises en place sur une base pluriannuelle puissent être maintenues et poursuivies en bonne coopération.

La Croatie rejoint l'Union européenne...

La bonne nouvelle c'est qu'après un processus long d'adhésion, la république de Croatie vient de rejoindre l'Union européenne.

Chaque nouvelle adhésion agite son lot de symboles (les ex-dictatures grecque d'abord, espagnole et portugaise ensuite ; la réunification allemande ; les ex-pays dits de l'Est; ...), la Croatie relevée d'une sale guerre ne fait pas exception.

Quand, début juillet, nous avons demandé à notre ami Zvonimir Frka-Petešić (Chef du département de la diplomatie publique au sein du Ministère croate des Affaires étrangères et européennes... et membre actif du Club de Venise) quel était son sentiment de «se réveiller en Europe», sa réponse a été la suivante : «Le réveil est grisant, je dois dire, bien qu'il faille du temps pour le réaliser pleinement, je présume.

Mais avoir pris l'avion hier avec ma seule carte d'identité et dans la file 'Citoyens UE' est déjà une manifestation tangible de notre nouveau statut.... Pour moi, c'est très gratifiant que d'avoir été témoin et très modeste acteur de cette grande et belle aventure historique à laquelle ont pris part l'ensemble de mes concitoyens. Une chose est sûre, malgré ses imperfections, par les passions qu'elle continue de susciter auprès des États aspirants et les efforts qu'ils sont prêts à consentir pour la rejoindre, l'Union européenne est sans équivalent dans le monde».

En grand professionnel qu'il est, il ne manquait pas d'ajouter qu'il était prêt avec son site internet multilingue : www.croatie.eu

Qu'ajouter à cela, si ce n'est souligner le rôle important que le Club de Venise a joué dans le domaine de la communication et de l'information publiques dans le cadre des processus d'adhésion et donc de l'intégration européenne.

Dès la perspective du quatrième élargissement à l'Autriche, la Suède et la Finlande, en 1995, et de manière systématique par la suite, les responsables du Club ont eu cette intelligence d'accueillir comme membres les représentants des pays candidats et de proposer, régulièrement, des échanges et des ateliers (comme à Poreč, en Croatie) consacrés aux actions de communication qui accompagnent nécessairement les processus de candidature et d'adhésion, pour l'information et la sensibilisation – voire le débat public – des citoyens concernés.

Des échanges de bonnes pratiques, l'élaboration d'un guide et des coopérations ont ainsi pu voir le jour. ■

*I have some good news and
some bad news.*

*Which do you want to hear
first?*

Philippe Caroyez & Vincenzo Le Voci
secretaries of the review

**The Commission announces that
it puts an end to the manage-
ment partnerships...**

Our previous number was mainly devoted to the “partnerships” binding the European Commission and many Member States, within a regulated framework, for the concerted and joint realization of communication actions on priority issues. Following the last workshop on these partnerships, organized by the Club with the Austrian colleagues in Vienna, we gave place to the achievements of the ones and others and echoed the extremely positive evaluations made by the Member States and the Commission, all based on the reports imposed after three years and necessarily carried out by independent firms or institutions.

In these pages, we showed the significant role played by the Club and its members to support the set up of these partnerships and to promote (with other Member States not yet involved in a partnership) and enrich them by the exchange of good practices, the cooperation between national services and the continuation of a reflection aimed at improving the mechanism and the procedures.

We also showed, and this is essential, the importance of these partnerships and of the specific momentum which they generate, making – on a national level, but with regard to the interinstitutional priority issues – cooperate a Member State, the representation in the country of the Commission and the office of the European Parliament. The whole being carried out in a “new spirit” which, in the normal scope of public communication actions, has led to explore and develop fields which are eventually rarely solicited, such as: very young audiences (6+ and 12+), ludo-educational activities, public debate, appeal to history, illustration of fundamental (founding?) values and search for support and some multilateral cooperations (by the exploitation for the benefit of several States of the rights acquired by one of them).

Confident we greeted the renewal of the partnerships for four more years and even dared to claim the increase of the budgets allocated to serve larger and more ambitious joint communication programs carried out with all the Member States and even with the candidate and accession countries.

Under these conditions, it is with consternation and disbelief that the partners learned that the Commission – for budgetary reasons – decided to put an end to the partnerships beyond 31 December 2013.

Besides the budgetary reasons pointed out (and some difficulties never identified until then in the cross-cutting evaluations and the contact meetings), with regard to the other activities also concerned, one can note of a form of focus through the giving up of delegated actions... bringing us back to a period prior to “plan D”.

First during the preparatory period to the introduction of the euro (in the form of “memorandum of understanding”), then within the framework of “plan D” for the recovery of the European public communication by Commissioner Wallström, the partnerships have showed their efficiency and thus their necessity.

It is obvious for us to act jointly to make sure that the information actions about Europe and its priorities best meet the expectations of the citizens and are disseminated in the most appropriate way.

The evaluations of the partnerships, carried out by neutral operators, confirm this position by showing the satisfactory results of the actions undertaken and the benefits of the cooperation between the representations of the European institutions and the national public authorities.

Beyond the actions implemented within this framework, it is thus important to emphasize the “tripartite” momentum generated as a major contribution of the partnerships. Such a cooperation, within a standardized framework and carried out on a regular (“compulsory”) and on-going basis, with annual communication plans and a multiannual strategic approach, did not exist and does not exist outside the “partnership system”.

The disappearance of such a framework thus makes us run the risk to see this momentum and permanent cooperation strategy disappear. And it is not acquired – nor guaranteed – that the specific ad hoc cooperations evoked by the Commission can maintain such a momentum.

It should first of all be stressed that these alternative forms are not specified by the Commission, at the present time, otherwise than as possibilities of specific cooperation, without other precise details.

In terms of organisation, the case-by-case approach and even the existence of several regulatory or programmatic frameworks (according to the activities considered and/or the topics covered) can be a significant disadvantage.

In terms of effectiveness or efficiency, as indicated, one can fear the disappearance or the weakening of the momentum which had gradually developed and which imposed a followed cooperation, with annual communication plans and a necessary multiannual strategic approach.

It will belong to the members of the Club to get involved, as they did until now, in order to avoid losing the momentum and to share the national experiences for the benefit of the dissemination of “good practices”. We will also have to stand by each other so that means are maintained and that actions developed on a multiannual basis can be maintained and continued in good cooperation.

Croatia joins the European Union...

The good news is that after a long accession process the Republic of Croatia has now joined the European Union.

Each new accession brings along its batch of symbols (the Greek ex-dictatorship first, the Spanish and Portuguese afterwards; the German reunification; ex-countries known as of the East; ...). Croatia raised from the ashes of a terrible war is no exception.

When, at the beginning of July, we asked our friend Zvonimir Frka-Petešić (Head of the public diplomacy department within the Croatian ministry of Foreign and European Affairs... and active member of the Club of Venice) what it felt like to “wake up in Europe”, he answered as follows: “I must say it is exciting but I presume it takes time to fully realize it.

Taking the plane yesterday with only my identity card and in the « EU-citizens » row is already a tangible demonstration of our new status.... For me, it is very rewarding to have been a witness and a very modest actor of this great and beautiful historic adventure in which all my fellow citizens took part. One thing is sure, in spite of its imperfections, by the passions it continues to generate among aspirant countries and the efforts they are willing to make in order to join it, the European Union has no equivalent in the world.”

And as a great professional he is also added that he was ready with his multilingual website: www.croatie.eu

What else can we add than to emphasize the significant role the Club of Venice played in the field of public communication and information within the framework of the accession processes and thus the European integration.

As from the perspective of the fourth enlargement to Austria, Sweden and Finland, in 1995, and systematically afterwards, the people responsible within the Club had the intelligence to welcome the representatives of the candidate countries as members and to propose exchanges and workshops (like in Poreč, Croatia) on a regular basis, dedicated to the communication actions which necessarily accompany the candidate and accession processes, for the information and awareness – and even the public debate – of the citizens concerned.

The exchange of good practices, the development of a guide and cooperations thus were made possible. ■

Per Eurobarometro 2013 siamo spaccati in due metà Identità europea versus identità nazionale

Stefano Rolando, Presidente Club of Venice.
Professore Comunicazione pubblica Università IULM Milano.

A fine luglio e metà settembre le istituzioni europee hanno fatto circolare i risultati di due rapporti speciali sulle tendenze dell'opinione pubblica, il cosiddetto Eurobarometro. Il rapporto licenziato dalla Commissione a luglio è il semestrale Eurobarometro "standard", mentre quello pubblicato a settembre e "sponsorizzato" dal Parlamento è denominato "Ad un anno dalle elezioni europee". L'approccio di questo strumento, che ha grande esperienza ma sconta una certa "ufficialità", è statisticamente serio, ma la formulazione della domande segue una logica di eccessiva prudenza e la distribuzione è comunicativamente modesta.

Ciò che fa di Eurobarometro una miniera, ma tuttora male esplorata. Cioè una fonte in sottordine anche quando le scadenze dell'agenda motiverebbero analisi non pietose. La scadenza più forte ed evidente riguarda le elezioni del Parlamento europeo nel maggio 2014. A Bruxelles il timore circolante è che in quel Parlamento potrebbero prevalere – o avere comunque un ruolo molto importante – rappresentanze poco "europeiste".

Che sommate al non voto, stimato in crescita, darebbero un segnale di evidente conflitto tra quadro "comunitario" e opinione pubblica.

Il rapporto di Eurobarometro (la mia analisi si concentra sul sondaggio del Parlamento detto anche "Parlo-metro") parla così un linguaggio molto cauto. Qualche volta considera che un 45% sia una "majorità", qualche altra volta dice "quasi majorità". In verità una "majorità" è difficile riscontrarla su quasi tutti i temi in discussione. E' questo – in grande sintesi – è il dato su cui la comunicazione pubblica europea deve lavorare.

Infatti siamo ormai a vista delle elezioni europee e con questi dati ci si deve confrontare. Sarebbe meglio che, partendo da questi dati, fosse possibile imbastire alla svelta un canovaccio responsabile del "dibattito possibile" in campagna elettorale. Mentre sappiamo che spesso le elezioni europee finiscono per vedere agitati problemi nazionali e locali e a tenere le questioni - che poi dovranno essere affrontate dagli eletti - in colpevole sottordine.

Ma vediamo rapidamente cosa dice il nuovo Rapporto di Eurobarometro.

Tema di fondo : essere europei, sentirsi europei, considerare il lato positivo delle cose europee, valutare ciò che conta il cittadino nel campo della UE.

Interrogati sui **risultati più positivi del sistema Europa** gli europei arrivano alla maggioranza solo a proposito della libertà di circolazione (56%) e della pace (53%). Tutto il resto è citato da minoranze, a cominciare dalla terza voce di questa classifica, l'euro (24%).

7



Directorate-General for Communication
Public Opinion Monitoring Unit



Brussels, 21 August 2013.

European Parliament Eurobarometer (EB79.5)

'ONE YEAR TO GO UNTIL THE 2014 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS'
Institutional Part

ANALYTICAL OVERVIEW

Coverage: EU28 (27 624 EU citizens)
Target group: Europeans aged 15 and over
Methodology: Face-to-face (CAPI)
Fieldwork: 7-23 June 2013, TNS Opinion

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Non fa il 50% nemmeno il **sentimento di identità** inteso come paritario (tanto nazionale quanto europeo), che arriva al 49%. E – attenzione – il 38% dice “solo nazionale” contro il 3% che si dice “solo europeo”. Può tuttavia consolare che capovolgendo il sentimento paritario (cioè tanto europeo quanto nazionale) si porta a casa un altro 7%. Insomma facendo sforzi, una “majorità” qui c’è; ma il dato deve far lavorare sulla forte resistenza identitaria del 45% dei cittadini europei.

Così è conseguente la risposta sugli **elementi che gli europei considerano costitutivi dell’identità europea**: il 42 % ammette che ormai sia l’euro (anche se piace e molti meno; e il confronto diventa un altro fronte di iniziativa comunicativa possibile); i valori della libertà sono indicati dal 40% (brutta risposta), la storia il 27% (c’è al tempo stesso saggezza se i cittadini fossero estremamente colti, mentre c’è da temere semplicemente che se ne infischino della storia); la cultura il 26% (insomma!).

Quindi se gli si proponesse più storia, più cultura e più libertà c’è da pensare che gli europei non rinforzerebbero così il **loro sentimento identitario comune**. Già. Per gli europei ci vorrebbe invece un sistema di protezione sociale europeo armonizzato (41%) e la possibilità di stabilirsi in qualunque paese dell’Unione una volta pensionati (34%). Riflettere su questo. Il tema c’è.

Se si va dritti al cuore del problema e si chiede **se si sentono “attaccati all’Europa”** gli europei si spaccano come una mela : il 48% dice sì. Ma c’è un però. Ed è che non bisogna citar loro quanto si sentono attaccati a casa propria (nazione, regione, comune). Se si comparano le risposte non c’è partita. E qui la prosa di Eurobarometro è sfumata e fa capire sì e no.

8 Va bene. Lasciamo da parte l’attaccamento. Almeno il **senso di appartenenza**, come va ?

Siamo al 50%. Va così dal 1973. Per converso il 31% pensa che non sia né una buona né una cattiva cosa, il 17% pensa che sia invece proprio una “cattiva cosa “. E anche qui il dato permette un certo lavoro interpretativo e comunicativo.

E veniamo alla fine ai **dati sulla democrazia**.

La tua voce conta in Europa? Dicono di sì il 39% degli europei, che pensano che la loro voce conti di più nel paese di appartenenza (58%) e che soprattutto la voce del loro paese di appartenenza conti più di loro in Europa (62%). Sulle prime si pensa ad effetto di propaganda governativa. Ma in realtà qui c’è un passaggio che meriterebbe una seria analisi qualitativa, impostata senza la preoccupazione dei ruoli delle tre (tra di loro conflittuali) istituzioni europee. Anche perché sul funzionamento della democrazia il 52% pensa che funzioni meglio a casa propria contro il 44% che pensa che funzioni di più in Europa. Anche qui sentire in profondità le ragioni e leggere il dato paese per paese (cosa che si farà presto vedendo la profondità del rapporto) fornirà argomenti interessanti.

Un tema politico fa capolino nel Rapporto: pensi che **eleggere direttamente il presidente della Commissione europea** spingerebbe di più alle urne?

Il 55% dice sì. Vista in prospettiva dicono che il 70% ci starà. Così – dicono – “le decisioni della UE sarebbero più legittimate”.

Ma chi parla è **un cittadino in genere piuttosto tiepido in materia europea**. Il 58% dice di non essere interessato alla politica europea (e la comunicazione continua a contemplare questo dato!) mentre scende il numero di chi si dice interessato (ora è il 43% con un forte arretramento rispetto al dato del 2012).

Tanto è vero che Eurobarometro tenta di cambiare lo scenario di prospettiva, introducendo **l’orizzonte 2025**: pensi che tutti gli Stati devono avanzare insieme o a diverse velocità?

Il 46% dice insieme, il 43% dice “velocità variabile”. Si ritrovano quando si punta agli obiettivi economici di quell’orizzonte: lotta alla disoccupazione, alle ineguaglianze sociali e al debito pubblico degli Stati (ai primi tre posti).

Una considerazione finale.

Come utilizzare questi dati in una strategia comunicativa? Due piste di lavoro.

- La prima è scegliere un tassello (andando a vedere le disaggregazioni nazionali). E impostare una campagna semestrale, sapendo che serve la rete ma serve anche una forte sinergia con i media (con quelli che ci stanno nella partnership). Poi, sei mesi dopo, misurare – su quel tassello (chiedendo la collaborazione di Eurobarometro) – la stessa questione rispetto allo stesso target. Il risultato è un delta (anche fosse piccolissimo, un delta è probabile). E’ il miglior compenso per un comunicatore, perché in caso di delta positivo vuol dire che la via tracciata è giusta.
- La seconda pista è portare nel sistema televisivo la questione su cui è spaccata l’opinione pubblica, trovando due competitor di grande richiamo per argomentare le componenti in conflitto dell’opinione pubblica. E poi far “votare” i telespettatori. Ciò misurerà la tendenzialità del riscontro di Eurobarometro, in un certo territorio, e quindi l’incremento dell’opinione a favore o contro sulla base non di una domanda casuale ma di una “iniezione “ di approfondimento. Se, per caso, la tendenza “per l’Europa” cresce rispetto a quella “contro” vuol dire che il target di riferimento è sensibile ai contenuti divulgativi e non solo all’influenza dei luoghi comuni. Prendere di corsa il “case history” e sottoporlo agli educatori di professione, cioè al mondo della scuola. Si è spalancato il portale più importante della comunicazione pubblica: quello del rapporto tra educazione e giovani. ■

Eurobarometer 2013: Split Into Two Halves European identity vs national identity

Stefano Rolando, Honorary President of the Club of Venice.
Professore Comunicazione pubblica Università IULM Milano.

In July and September 2013 the European institutions have circulated the results of special reports on public opinion trends - the so-called "Eurobarometers". The one published before summer was the Commission standard Eurobarometer, while the survey published in September is the one "sponsored" by the European Parliament and named "One year ahead of the European elections". The approach of this tool, which has a long tradition but reflects a certain "official jargon", it is statistically serious, but the questions are formulated following a logic of excessive prudence and its distribution lacks a true communicative approach.

This makes the Eurobarometer look like a sort of not well explored mine. Consequently it triggers its underestimation, whilst today's challenging deadlines would suggest to analyse it very thoroughly and critically.

The most important and obvious challenge concerns the European elections deadline (May 2014). The fear pervading Brussels is that in "that Parliament" may prevail - or end up playing anyhow a very important role - very little pro-European forces. This, in addition to the estimated increasingly low turnout, would give a signal of clear conflict between the "Community" framework and public opinion.

The Eurobarometer (in my short analysis I focus on the EP report or "Parlometer") therefore adopts a very cautious language. Sometimes it considers 45% as a "majority" or "almost majority". As a matter of fact, a "true majority" is hardly identifiable in almost all discussion topics. This is, to resume, the data on which the European public communication must focus.

QD4. In the near future, do you see yourself as...?



This question was taken from the Standard EB79, carried out in May 2013

As a matter of fact, at the eve of the European elections we need to draw inspiration from these figures to build quickly a canvass for a “realistic debate” during the elections campaign. Meanwhile, we well know that very often the European elections end up stirring national and local problems and neglecting those key questions which will have then to be tackled by the elected.

But let’s see quickly what the new EP Eurobarometer:

The underlying theme is : to be European, to feel European, to consider the positive side of European issues and to evaluate the citizen’s role in the EU. When asked what are the most positive achievements of the “Europe” system there is a clear majority of citizens’ only in undisputably recognizing freedom of movement (56%) and peace (53%). All other topics are mentioned by minorities, starting with the third item of this ranking: the euro (24%).

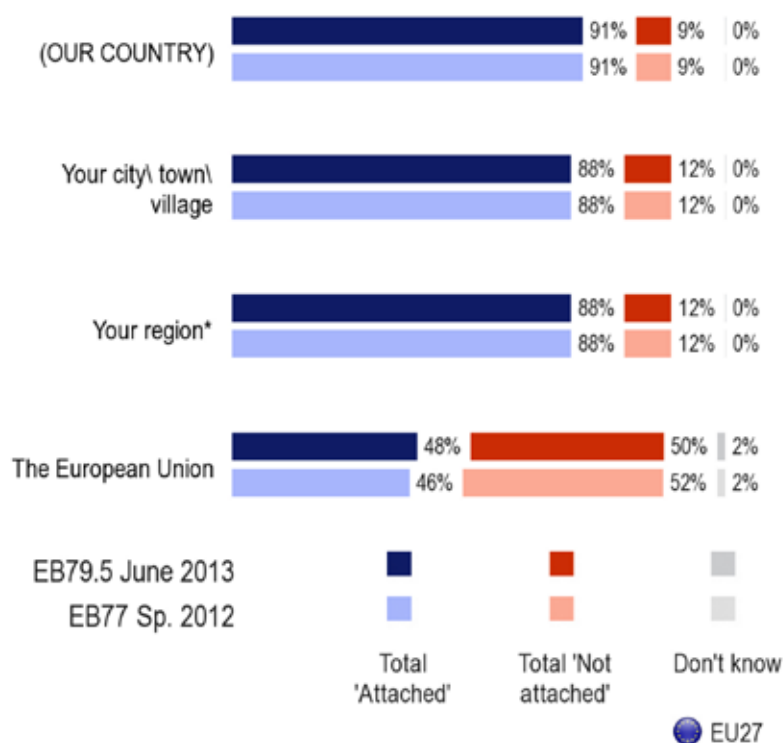
The perception of “identity” (as “national” as “European”) is perceived by less than 50% (49%), And – very relevant - 38% specified to feel “only national” compared to 3% who feels “only European”. However, it could be “comfortable” that only 7% feel the inverted order (“as European as national”). With a few efforts to read those figures positively, there is a prevailing feeling of “European identity” though with a strong resilience (45% of the interviewees).

Consequently, with regard to the question “Which are the distinctive features of a European identity”, 42% admit that today it is “the euro” (although many like it and others dislike it, and the comparison becomes another conflictual communication front line, 40% indicates “the values of freedom” (disappointing figure) , 27% mentions “history” (good sign of wisdom if shown by well educated citizens, whilst worrying if people simply do not care about history) and 26% “culture” (hmm...). From these figures it would seem that the Europeans would not reinforce their common identity feeling through more history, more culture and more freedom but rather through a harmonised European system of social protection (41%) and the possibility to settle in whatsoever country of the EU once retired (34%). There is enough ground for reflection here...

When going straight to the core of the problem and replying to the question “do you feel attached to Europe?” citizens are split like an open apple : 48% said “but with a caveat: one should not ask at the same time how they feel attached to their own home (country, region, municipality). If you compare their two answers, there is no game, and in that case the Eurobarometer figures are very nuanced and difficult to decrypt (“yes and no”).

It’s fine. Let’s set aside the attachment. How is it going with the sense of belonging? We are at 50%. The trend hasn’t changed since 1973. Conversely, 31% believes that it is neither a good nor a bad thing, whilst 17 % think it is indeed a “bad thing.” Interesting ground for interpreting and communicating such figures.

Q21. Please tell me how attached you feel to...



*The item 'your region' is compared with EB73 Pr. 2010

And now let's deal with data on democracy. "Does your voice counts in Europe?" 39% of the Europeans say yes, 58% believe their voice counts more in their own country and 62% that their country's voice counts more than them in Europe. At first sight this may be an opinion influenced by government propaganda, but in reality this is a point which deserves a serious qualitative analysis to be carried out without worrying about the different roles of three European institutions (traditionally conflicting with each other). This is also interesting because 52% think that democracy works better at home compared to 44 % who think that it works better in Europe. Here again it would be interesting to carry out an in-depth study of the reasons laying behind the important nuances from country to country (which the report explores thoroughly).

An important political issue peeps in the report: "Do you think that a directly elected President of the European Commission would push more citizens to go vote?" 55% said "yes". Perspectives are encouraging (70 % will go vote") – and people say that 'this way EU decisions would be more legitimate.' But the interviewees are citizens usually giving a lukewarm reaction when answering on European topics: 58% say they are not interested in European politics (and communication continues to contemplate this trend!) while the percentage of those defining themselves interested has declined to 43% (large setback compared to the 2012).

Against this scenario, the Eurobarometer is trying to change perspective by introducing the "2025 horizon": "Do you believe that all Member States should advance together or at different speeds?" 46% said "together", 43% said "at variable speed ". All share the same views, though, when looking at the economic objectives of that horizon: fighting against unemployment, social inequalities and States' public debt are jointly recognised as the top three priorities.

A final consideration: How to use this data in the framework of a communication strategy ? There are two action lines:

- The first is to choose a pattern and get to study the national breakdown closely. This could be done by setting up a semi-annual campaign which should help optimise networking and building strong synergies with media who accept to invest and work in a partnership). Then, six months later, measure results - on that pattern (through the cooperation of the Eurobarometer) – studying how citizens' answers to the same questions have changed with regard to the same target. The results is a delta (maybe small, but a delta is likely) which for a communicator is the best reward because in case of a "positive" delta the way which was paved is right.
- The second track is to broadcast on tv the debate on the topic on which public opinion is split, finding two very attractive competitors who would plead the cause of the two conflicting public opinion components. And then have the audience "vote". This will measure the trends of the specific topic covered by the Eurobarometer, in whichever territory is chosen, against a question which has not been put on a random basis but penetrating expressly in the citizens' mind to feed the debate on a crucial topic for them. If, by chance, the "pro-European" trend grows up to the detriment of the voices "against", this would mean that the target audience is sensible to the information provision/campaign and not only the influence of "clichés". There is a need to convey/submit quickly the "case history " to the professional educators: in other words, to address the world of schools. The most important portal for public communication - the relationship between education and young people – is now wide open. ■



Sunset Boulevard for management partnerships Requiem for true cooperation on “Communicating Europe”?

Vincenzo Le Voci
Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

Introduction

In our preface to this new edition of “Convergences” we have already mentioned the unfavourable trends stemming from the European Commission’s unexpected and unilateral decision to discontinue management partnerships, one of the most performing cooperation tools which were increasingly developing since their creation in 2006.

This contribution aims to provide more factual elements which will hopefully enable our friends of the Club of Venice to have a more comprehensive insight of what is happening and reflect together on possible ways and means to identify new solutions for a true and longlasting cooperation in the field of communication between national authorities and EU institutions.

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Historical context

In November 2011, on the occasion of the Club 25th anniversary, we celebrated the event, among others, by publishing the book “25 Years of Public Communication on Europe”. One of the main Chapter of that publication was devoted to “Communicating Europe in Partnership”, with several contributions from MS and EU officials praising the ongoing smooth relations and successful implementation of management partnership agreements (MPAs).

All voices raised on that occasion were in favour of this form of cooperation:

- it all started in 2006 with Germany as a pioneer, being the first partner to sign a bilateral agreement with the Commission
- subsequently this approach was followed by an increasing number of Member States (as of today, eighteen)
- three more countries were already undergoing conversion of strategic partnerships into management partnerships
- as we already said, all national evaluations of the implementation, carried out by independent bodies, had been so far very positive

- the budget allocated to these instruments was slightly but steadily increasing
- the eighteen Member States concerned managed to implement MPAs satisfactorily, spending almost the entire of the global annual envelope (97.5%).
- From bi-lateral interviews with the relevant national authorities and from an internal analysis of national presentations and evaluations of the MPAs it emerged that these agreements were instrumental in financing a wide variety of activities, among others:
 - joint communication in schools with focus on teachers and students training,
 - cooperation with regional media,
 - seminars and conferences for NGOs,
 - multiplier groups and local contact persons,
 - publications and interactive tools targeting young people,
 - bus tours for journalists and young people,
 - competitions for university students,
 - TV campaigns focusing the benefits from membership,
 - production of films promoting social and cultural values,
 - information campaigns on energy and climate change, environment, growth and employment, economic and social recovery, focusing also on regional strategies,
 - initiatives aiming to inspire young European press specialists and learn journalistic skills,
 - interactive games,
 - public events raising and strengthening civil society participation,
 - projects combining traditional media relations with internet and radio,
 - public debates in institutes of international relations and political sciences.



The turning point

The Commission submitted the draft communication budget for 2014 on 26.6.2013. Without prior discussion or consultation of its partners, it decided to operate a drastic reduction of the budget for “Communicating Europe in Partnership”:

- a new budget line 16 03 01 04 has been created and re-named as “Communication of the Commission’s representations and partnership actions”; this new line includes former 16 03 02 01 (“Communication of the Commission Representations”) and 16 03 04 (“Going Local/Communicating Europe in Partnership”)
- the total amount conveyed in the new budget line suffered approx 45% cut (from € 19.7M in 2013 to € 10.7M in 2014).
- the Commission has not clarified the breakdown of the new specific budget line 16 03 01 04 (in other words, it has not specified how much of the 10.7M€ it envisages to really devote to “activities in partnership”, since it seems to be only willing to decide from now on the implementation “on a case by case basis” (textually said in publicly reported meetings)
- the Commission has clearly indicated that, from now on, it would only accept other two forms of partnership : the so-called “strategic” and “one-off” partnerships. This goes clearly in the wrong direction, since:
 - in 10 years there have never been “one-off” partnerships (a “fake” form of agreement, since in reality they are not based on any concrete planning)
 - “strategic” partnerships are far less convenient as they do not foresee delegation of budget execution to the national authorities under the so-called “indirect management” formula and do not allow partners to decide together in tri-lateral EP-Commission-MS coordination, since the decision-making is totally in the hands of the Commission)

- surprisingly, the Commission makes no longer reference to the Joint Declaration “Communicating Europe in Partnership”, the political commitment signed by the three main EU institutions on 22.10.2008 in support of the increasingly co-operative framework, which had so far systematically mentioned as a stronghold in all annual draft budget records. In Chapter 16 of the draft budget (“communication falling under DG COMM competence area”), the Commission now only refers to its 2013 work programme, to the orientations from the IGI (Interinstitutional Group on Information), and to “Tasks resulting from the Commission’s prerogatives stemming from the Treaties and the EU Financial Regulation”.
- in July 2013, when the examination of the draft budget for 2014 was still being carried out by the Council, the Heads of each Commission Representations notified the governmental authorities concerned, pointing out, among others, that:
 - in this new age of communication there is a need to increasingly focus on modern and cost-effective ways to work, namely on on-line activities and social media;
 - the problem needs to be seen in relation to the fact that the original concept of MPAs was to have both MS and the Commission contribute with matching funds to the operation, while this was only concretized in 6-7 countries;
 - the EP Parliament might still choose to top up the budget, but this would not affect the Commission’s decision to discontinue the existing MPAs.

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The same concerns are raised with regard to two other major cuts proposed by the Commission as reflected in the following communication budget lines:

- 16 03 01 01 (multimedia actions, in particular the funds for the EURANET pan-European radio circuit and for PRESSEUROP online tool that currently disseminates breaking news of the European press - from €28.4M in 2013 to €18.7M in 2014, -35%).
- 16 02 01 (programme “Europe for Citizens” - from €26.5M in 2013 to €21M in 2014, -20%).

Having regard to the citizens’ increasing interest in these communication activities, the “sacrifices” imposed to the EURANET network and to the “Europe for Citizens” programme can hardly be understood since they hit initiatives that involved a wide variety of young stakeholders and enabled MS’ public and independent civil society bodies to play a concrete role as partners in the implementation

The key issue

The main question is: What is Happening?

- Why, a few months before the end of its quinquennial mandate and on the eve of the pan-European and national implementation of the communication strategy in view of the European elections, the Commission decided to reverse the path?
- Why is the Commission changing its approach by penalizing successful cooperation instruments and initiatives which were reaching out to millions of citizens and bringing very positive return?
- Why this unexpected decision is taken without due consideration for the remarkable efforts made by national authorities to put in place the organisational structures (investing in particular in human resources) to ensure the smooth running of the MPAs implementation, causing the Member States concerned to deal with a very difficult and totally unexpected organizational issue when governmental funds EU-wide are subject to important cuts?

The answer may be researched by reflecting once again on the core principles of EU communication:

- Communicating the EU's added value remains a great challenge for both the Council and the Member States, as well as for the other EU institutions and bodies
- Although there is no explicit legal reference to “communication” in the treaties, throughout the last twenty years (since 1992, with the Maastricht Treaty and the principles subsequently shared on the same year by the European Council in Edinburgh and Birmingham) “Communicating Europe” has become de facto a virtual policy
- Cooperation in this field among the key players, in particular among the EU institutions and between institutions and Member States and EU institutions, is therefore crucial.
- However, the Commission has always considered communication as a “task resulting from its prerogatives at institutional level” (quoted from the statements in its draft budget package – see above)
- MS have contested this individualistic approach and regretted that the Commission has almost never coordinated in advance with the governmental authorities the information campaigns it carried out in the MS. And everybody knows how risky this may be, particularly in times of crisis and loss of people's confidence in the national and European institutions : under these circumstances a uni-directional approach “top-down” in communication, without any interaction and coordination with the national authorities, may only lead to criticism and misperceptions



- The main point is that the policy of general information on the EU cannot be intended as an autonomous action by the Commission, even in absence of a legal basis. The Commission itself, when adopting one of its most comprehensive analytical papers in this domain in February 2006 in the middle of the deep reflection period following the negative outcome of the referenda in France and The Netherlands on the draft EU Constitutional Treaty, denominat-ed its document “White Paper for a EU communication policy”
- so, in ultimate analysis, the return to a centralised, direct execution of the budget in this field and the dismantling of successful instrument of cooperation which provided evidence that joint, “democratic” co-ordination pays off seems totally anachronistic
- Moreover, stating that “les jeux sont faits” and deci-sions are taken regardless of the ongoing budget exercise (procedure currently in the hands of the European Parliament who is due to scrutinize all figures in principle until 23 October) appears po-litically and strategically incorrect

Is there a “way forward”?

As public communicators we cannot sit along the river and wait until we see cooperation taking the shape of a dead body and following the stream. We DO have an ethic duty, which is built upon our inner principles (professionalism, dedication to information provision, transparency, interaction with citizens as individuals and organized civil society, smooth and loyal relations with all our stakeholders).

Against the abovementioned scenario, which seems to project us almost twenty years backward, it is difficult to formulate suggestions for revitalising cooperation (or should I better say “protecting what is still surviving from the previous coopera-tion”?).

The Commission has been invited to propose concrete alterna-tives to minimize the impact of its decision on the cooperation with Member States and to safeguard interinstitutional coop-eration. Meetings in the Council framework (Working Party on Information) and at political level (Interinstitutional Group on Information - IGI) are foreseen within the next few weeks.

The Commission has also been invited to present a compre-hensive overview of the communication projects and activities with/without partnership as from 2014. If this step gets con-cretised, there may be a chance for a new “rapprochement”, although we will probably need long, long time to reconnect... The key ingredients remain joint planning, joint strategies, joint monitoring and joint evaluations.

The Club of Venice agenda brings together the senior com-municators from all MS and institutions together in an informal framework which is the ideal platform to have an open and frank debate on this topic. What we all need is to use “com-mon sense”, be available to sit once again and re-discuss open-ly what makes things difficult nowadays and try to re-design a truly cooperative framework. ■



Reforming state communication

Ever since this current Greek government took office, about 15 months ago, we've had two kinds of priorities in the area of communication: immediate and structural.

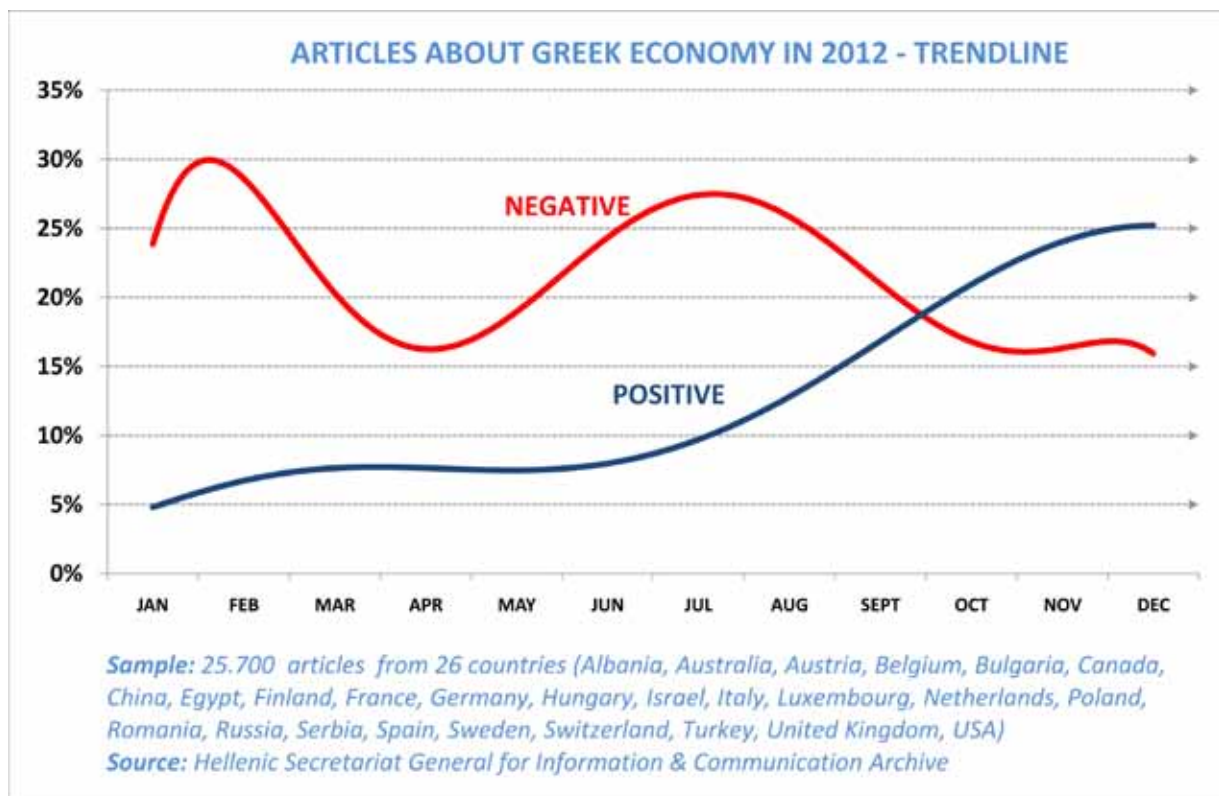
Our immediate objectives were relating to the country's pressing political necessities, namely to help re-build Greece's image abroad, particularly in the eyes of policy makers, opinion formers and the general public in countries that were called on to contribute with their tax money to the Greek bail-out packages.

This was a task exemplifying how communication is not merely a tool to support policy, but densely intertwined with it, an integral part of policy making. As it turned out, the whole exercise has been a success; our statistical studies prove that perceptions about Greece have improved greatly since summer 2012, as indeed would suggest an empirical view of how Greece was presented in the international public opinion before, and after, our traumatic twin general elections in May and June 2012. [fig. 1]

Of course, the main source of this success was the fact that there was a major policy change by a fresh government headed by a Prime Minister determined to convince our partners about his government's reform drive. But energising the modest resources of the Secretariat General for Information and Communication, both in Greece and abroad, was a key factor to that shift in the country's global image.

Our structural objectives are closely linked to the major reforms the Greek state is undergoing.

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The need to eliminate waste of public funds and improve efficiency has led us to work out a complete restructuring of the Secretariat's resources in order to move its focus away from the out-dated task of monitoring and recording publicity -- a task much less tedious and less labour-intensive in today's online global village. When the new structures are in place (the roll-out is planned for early 2014) our highly-skilled personnel, including hundreds of well-trained communication experts and journalists, will be concentrating on proper communication, helping spread the government's message of change at home and abroad, as well as specific public policies to the Greek public.

A light team will undertake the task of informing the government in real time of any piece of information published anywhere in the world that is of significance for Greek policy makers, utilising latest monitoring technology and all kinds of delivery tools.

The main bulk of our resources will be working on implementing the communication strategy drawn up by the government and its academic and market advisers, on designing promotion initiatives and on measuring the effectiveness of any communication action by any branch of the government.

Furthermore, in the future the Secretariat will act as communication consultant to all parts of the state machinery, central government and linked organisations, in order to spread its expertise and know-how and improve common standards observance (such as website architecture, design and usability). We shall also act as a central negotiator for media buying, bringing together all of the government's media spending, thus achieving lower cost and higher returns on investment.

Besides reforming our own way of work, we have also set out to bring the same kind of reform to the rest of the government in order to improve the information it offers citizens about the public service.



Traditionally, Greek ministries would lack a consistent long-term communication strategy because they lack the necessary structures to produce and implement it. Their communication structure is limited to the minister's press office that is manned by professionals chosen by the minister of the time; when the minister changes, so does the press office staff. As a result, press offices act as purely political structures without any continuity that is normally required in public service.

That is about to change. The Secretariat General for Information and Communication will undertake the task of setting up permanent communication units in each ministry and government organisation. They will be run by specially trained ministry officials, they will design and put in place their own communication plans and secure an institutional memory exists regardless of personnel change in the hierarchy.

In this process, our Secretariat will act as adviser, to provide knowledge, experience, training and supervision and to make sure each communication initiative is in line with the government's and the country's strategic communication master plan and guidelines, but leaving the ownership of these new units and their plans to those running them, the ministries themselves. Through this reform, we expect the quantity and quality of information being made available to the public greatly to improve.

This is a time of dramatic reform for Greece. If all goes well (and there is growing confidence, both in Greece and in Europe, that it will), the country will come out of its current ordeal stronger and ready to tackle the challenges of the global environment -- it could even prove to be a model for others in need of reform.

Reforming state communication is part of the larger plan this government has been working hard to implement. And it is more crucial than its apparent breadth; for mobilising the public and rallying their support for the grand scheme is a key element to general success.

When today's struggles end, and Greece returns to economic growth and success through hard-earned reforms, we at the Secretariat General for Information and Communication shall be able to say to ourselves: "We played a part!". ■



Public communication versus political communication and the relationship between public communicators and politicians



Eleonora Gavrielides
Member of the Steering Group
of the Club of Venice

It is a fact that communicators in the public sphere, have political bosses. In order to be useful to them and to that extent not become irrelevant, they need to cater to the politicians' legitimate needs. If on the other hand they cater only to the political needs and desires of their political masters they run the risk of becoming irrelevant and possibly dangerous to the public who are their real bosses whom they are duty bound to serve.

Another obvious reality is:

Politicians are more interested in political rather than public communication. This centres round using the media to gain the public vote and to influence political decisions. This means there is a role for political communication in government operations. Some kind of civil service outfit is usually responsible for releasing information of various kinds to the media.

A good gauge for the success or failure of political communication in an environment of a great expansion of media and technology outlets is a focus on whether they deliver what they promise. Critics argue that if voters choose not to engage with the political process, this means that political communication has failed.

Public communication, on the other hand, is a duty of an administration towards the citizens of the country and if it can be perceived to be politically neutral, it can have credibility among the public which it genuinely seeks to provide with added value.

Let us see in which cases we normally need to have public information:

Effective communication to the public is necessary for the carrying out of government policy even though it may have nothing to do with strict political communication. It is a service to the public and an important addition to government policy and the procedures through which this policy is implemented. When does the state usually communicate with its citizens?

Let's look at some obvious examples:

It is often necessary to inform people about new legislation, the programme of the government may need clarification/ explanation, it may be part of a public information campaign of the administration e.g. road safety, it may aim to guide people through the labyrinth of civil services. It may need to inform people about a crisis and give necessary instructions to ensure their safety and it may be needed in order to promote the interests of the country abroad.

Now let us try to see how public and political communication interlink.

We cannot discount that politicians have an interest in serving the public. Let us see how bona fide public communication as carried out by public communicators can serve the world of politics and politicians.

- If the public communication has a beneficial effect on the lives of citizens the current government naturally and legitimately benefits from this
- Public servants are more credible- some would say with good reason -than politicians. Therefore the messages disseminated by civil service departments tend to be more trusted by the public and these messages are generally messages that the government wishes to disseminate and are part and parcel of the policies it wants to implement
- Politicians are generally not public communication experts, however charismatic or talented they may be. Therefore it is worth for them to rely on professionals whose job is to get the best possible results
- Sometimes it is better tactics for politicians to allow the communication on difficult or controversial issues or just difficult or technical issues or parts of issues to the civil servants. This makes a useful buffer zone available in the sense that it provides a little distance for the politician or prepares the ground for greater involvement when things are clearer or more urgent or when the shit hits the fan as the case may be

- A good relationship between politicians and public communicators has the best chance of working for the benefit of the public and that in its turn serves both the politicians and the public administration both of which need the consent and the good will of the people to continue to function without serious problems

Let us now look at this relationship. This is not easy and it needs apart from mutual respect, trust and goodwill, constant adjustment and clear boundaries. Also it needs a clear understanding of each other's function and how the one can complement the other. Thus, when all these ingredients exist, there can be a very beneficial relationship for both parties in it and most of all for the country itself.

Generally politicians do not know much anything about the ins and outs of the civil service. Their personalities, their background, (educational and social) and their demographic characteristics naturally vary widely, but in the end it is not so much the type of person that makes a difference to the level of cooperation. It is more about both parties being genuinely wishing and striving to achieve the synthesis between the political goals and the public communication goals, understanding that the two are complementary.

What boils down is that if politicians help public communicators to do their own work well, this will have a very positive impact on the success of their own work. And it helps if they can inspire civil servants with their vision. This is not something that can be taken for granted, given that -fortunately- at least in most countries, civil servants do not change every time there is a change of government. The fact that they remain enhances the professionalism, independence and credibility of the civil service. It is this experience and professionalism that does not make it necessary that public communicators agree one hundred percent with their political bosses about the essence of their policies. They can still help the politicians with their communications in so doing, serve the country and the public.

I do not mean to paint too rosy a picture or to be unrealistic. There are difficulties. Not least because the world of politics is very often a brutal place with parameters that can change drastically without a moment's notice and politicians themselves suffer from that as do their associates.

In conclusion, politicians and public communicators may make "strange bedfellows" but they can help each other do their job and they have every reason to try to cooperate to that end. It is a fact that public communicators can provide their professional knowhow and the credibility they enjoy among the public due to their political neutrality and that, equally, politicians are in a position to influence the world of professional communicators through promoting legislation and through putting in place those conditions on the part of government that facilitate the work of the civil servants in general and public communicators in particular. ■



EU welcomes its 28th Member State: now... keeping the momentum

Zvonimir Frka-Petešić
Member of the Steering Group
of the Club of Venice



Croatia is the first Western Balkans country to join the European Union. Its accession on 1 July 2013 is the result of a decade-long negotiation process.

A long, strong, successful timetable:

- 1 July 2013: Croatia joins the EU
- June 2013: end of the ratification process - Croatia's Accession Treaty ratified by all EU member states
- 26 March 2013: Commission publishes its last monitoring report on Croatia's accession preparations
- 22 January 2012: EU accession referendum in Croatia. 2/3 of voters in favour
- 9 December 2011: Croatia and the EU sign the Accession Treaty
- 5 December 2011: Council adopts its decision on the admission of Croatia to the EU
- 30 June 2011: all 35 negotiation chapters are closed successfully
- 3 October 2005: Council decides to open accession negotiations with Croatia
- 17-18 June 2004: European Council confirms Croatia as candidate country
- 21 February 2003: Croatia applies for EU membership
- 29 October 2001: Croatia signs Stabilisation and Association Agreement

We are proud of this achievement and would like to recall some milestones, historical moments in the Croatian path towards EU membership:

How was information and communication provision handled during this long process? What was the impact of public (government and institutional) communicators on the way to accession?

Working with our friends and peer colleagues of the Club of Venice, we have several times shared our common feeling that communication plays a crucial role not only in informing citizens about work in progress during the negotiations, but also in trying to keep the level of public support for enlargement high. People had to be informed in an objective way, false expectations avoided, inaccurate information corrected and unjustified fears allayed. It is a hard task which the Croatian authorities honored with determination and coherence.

But communication does not end with accession. As a matter of fact, the signature of the Accession Treaty, the national referendum and the official entry of Croatia as 28th EU Member State were just the beginning of a new challenging adventure. After the difficult task of preparing citizens for enlargement, we have to share another important "common duty": continuing our task in a clear, concise, transparent and exhaustive manner in order to explain changes that the EU membership will bring, how tangible is the EU's added value, what are the new opportunities it offers and will offer; in other words, how the EU membership will start having a direct impact on citizens' daily lives. This is the only recipe to gain citizens' confidence and maintain public support.

Needless to say, the public at large, and in particular those groups of the population with specific concerns (e.g. farmers, liberal professions, entrepreneurs, students, teachers, and the aged population) should be kept informed about the possibilities for aid from the EU (subsidies, structural funds, research programmes, mobility programmes, etc.).



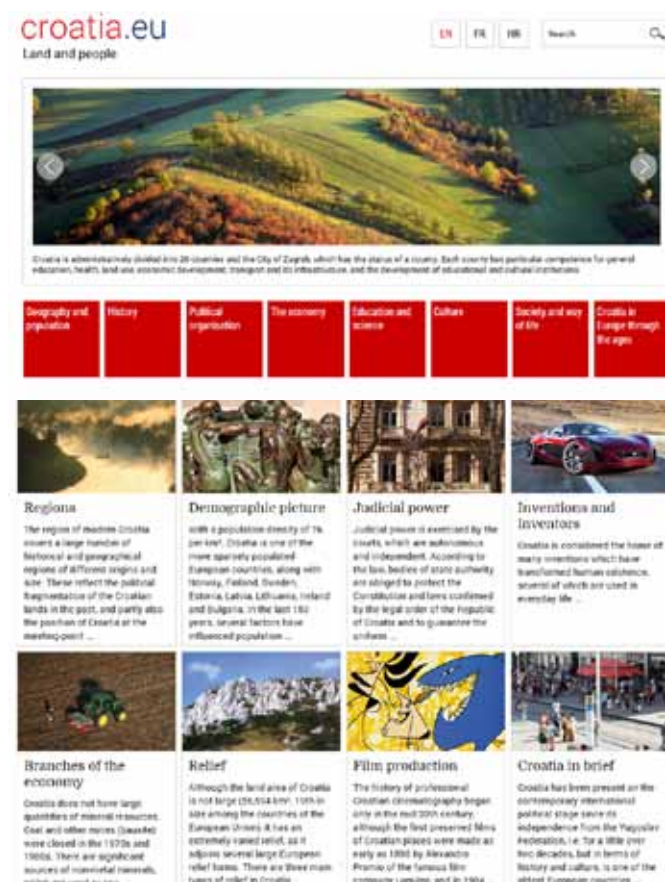
Citizens should get information about the day-to-day activities of Croatia inside the EU institutions. It is particularly important that an EU dimension is reflected in general government communication on current affairs, so as to promote an understanding that work at EU level is to be regarded in the same way as work at national level. EU membership should gradually become part of the national identity.

We have shared these principles with our colleagues from the Club of Venice since long time ago. It is worth to remember the first workshop on communication on the enlargement organised by the Club and hosted by the Croatian Government authorities in Poreč on 21 November 2009. That was a great moment to share good and forward-looking feelings, discussing communication challenges during the different phases of the enlargement process, planning, strategies, communication tools, products, new perspectives for cooperation, analysing the audiences' profiles, in other words, trying to identify jointly success factors for enlargement communication.

The key instruction for short, medium and long-term action is: "keep the momentum" and maintain inspiration, motivation and engagement at their highest levels.

But above all, the experience and ideas shared within the Club of Venice were a constant and an irreplaceable asset and a valuable resource during both the EU information and the EU referendum campaigns, so I wish to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all of you, members of the Club, for your friendship, your availability, precious cooperation and advice.

Here below, I am pleased to share with the readers of "Convergences" some screenshots as well as practical information on Croatia which is available in the Croatian Government web portal <http://www.croatia.eu/> (in EN, FR and HR) and to invite also to visit the website "Croatia in the EU" <http://www.croatia-in-the-eu.eu/en>, which provides comprehensive information on Croatia's path towards EU membership. ■



Zvonimir Frka-Petešić
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Croatia in brief

Official name	Republic of Croatia
Capital city	Zagreb
Surface area	land 56,594 km ² , coastal waters (inland and territorial waters) 31,067 km ²
Highest peak	Dinara 1,831 m
Language	Croatian
Population (2011 census)	4,284,889
Political system	unitary democratic parliamentary republic
Head of state	President of the Republic
Membership of international organisations	UN (1992), NATO (2009), EU (2013)
Gross National Product (2012)	EUR 45 billion
Gross National Product per capita	EUR 10,205
Exports	EUR 9.6 billion
Imports	EUR 16.2 billion
Currency	kuna (HRK)
Statehood Day	June 25
International country code	HR
Telephone prefix	385
Internet domain	.hr
Time zone	UTC+1

Geography

Croatia is shaped like a horseshoe, stretching from Vukovar in the northeast, past Zagreb in the west, and to Dubrovnik in the far south. It gained most of its present-day contours at the end of the 17th century. With a surface area of 56,594 km², it is 19th among the European Union countries according to size, falling between Latvia and Slovakia. In terms of relief and climate, it is extremely diverse. The territory includes extensive plains in the continental region between the River Drava and River Sava (Slavonia), mountainous areas in the centre (Lika and Gorski Kotar), and in the west and south, a long, indented, sunny coastline with over a thousand islands (Istria and Dalmatia). Croatia belongs to the Danube Basin and the Adriatic Sea and forms the Mediterranean front of Central Europe, positioned favourably in terms of geography and communications at the meeting point of important European corridors, while its harbours are used as sea exits by the neighbouring countries to the north. Croatia is the third richest country in Europe in terms of natural water resources, and boasts a particularly well-preserved ecological environment, with hundreds of endemic plant and animal species. Almost 10% of the country is protected within 11 nature parks, 8 national parks and two strict nature reserves.

History

Contemporary Croatia, which gained independence in 1991, is the successor of the 9th century Croatian medieval principalities established in the marches of the Carolingian Empire, followed by the Kingdom of Croatia, founded in 925 by King Tomislav. Soon after the death of the last great Croatian king, Dmitar Zvonimir, Croatia entered into a personal union with Hungary, and in the 14th century, the throne belonged to the French Anjou dynasty. After the Ottoman invasions in the 16th century and the loss of large tracts of land, Croatian dignitaries elected Ferdinand Habsburg as monarch in 1527, and the country remained within the Austrian Empire until 1918. The first half of this period was marked by constant wars with the Ottomans and Venetian encroachment upon greater and greater areas along the coast (Istria and Dalmatia), apart from the far south, where the independent Dubrovnik Republic developed free trade in the Mediterranean between 1358 and 1808. After the defeat of Venice and a short period in which southern Croatia was incorporated in Napoleon's province of Illyria (1809–1813), all the Croatian lands were brought together within the Habsburg Monarchy, though they were still separate entities. They were united briefly in 1848, during the Croatian national revival. After the First World War, Croatia became part of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which was transformed after 1945 into a Communist federation, in which Croatia was one of six republics until 1991. Although recognised as an independent state by the international community on 15 January 1992, Croatia was forced to defend its independence by armed struggle until 1995, when the occupied territories were liberated. In 1992, Croatia became a member of the United Nations, in 2009, of NATO, and on 1 July 2013, of the European Union.

Political organisation

Croatia is a parliamentary democracy and is organised as a unitary republic. The social state, freedom, equality, equal rights and the rule of law are among the highest values of the constitutional order. The political system is based on the principle of the division of power into three branches: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. In the Croatian parliament, or Sabor, which has a single house and has inherited many centuries of parliamentary tradition, its members are elected for four years. The President of the Republic, who is elected by general, direct election for a period of five years, represents the country abroad, cooperates with the Government in shaping and implementing foreign policy and commands the armed forces. The Government proposes laws and the State Budget, leads foreign and internal policy, and directs and monitors the work of the state administration. Croatia is divided administratively into 20 counties and the City of Zagreb. Alongside the judiciary, the institute of the Ombudsperson promotes and protects the legal rights of citizens. There are also Ombudspersons for Children, Gender Equality, and Persons with Disabilities.

Population

With a population of 4.3 million, Croatia ranks 21st in the European Union, between Ireland and Lithuania. About 60% of the population live in urban centres occupying less than 15% of the territory of the country, and of these, one in four lives in the capital, Zagreb. As life expectancy has risen, almost a quarter of the population of Croatia is over 60 years of age, while about 15% is under 15. In terms of nationality, Croats comprise 90% of the population. The Roman Catholic Church is the largest religious confession (86%), followed by the Orthodox (4.4%; mostly Serbs, who also form the largest national minority), Muslims (1.5%) and Protestants (0.3%). Croats also live in neighbouring countries as indigenous inhabitants, mostly in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Croatian diaspora worldwide, from Australia to North and South America and Western Europe, comprises over two and a half million people.

The economy

Since service industries comprise about two-thirds of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and agriculture accounts for less than 5%, the structure of the Croatian economy is similar to that of the countries of the European Union. The main economic branches in the country are determined by natural resources, but also by technology and industry (shipbuilding, construction, petrochemicals, the food industry). The most important branch of the economy is tourism, with 10 million foreign guests per year, contributing 15% to GDP. As in many European countries, the greatest problem facing the Croatian economy in the current period of crisis is the relatively high level of unemployment. Croatia has a developed infrastructure, and in the last 15 years, 1,000 km of modern highways have been built, which has contributed significantly to linking the countries of the European Union. In fact, Croatia conducts almost two-thirds of foreign trade with these countries, primarily Italy, Germany, Slovenia and Austria, while Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia are also important trading partners.

Education and science

In alignment with European standards, Croatia's higher education system has adopted the best features of the Bologna Process, contributing to the growing integration of science and scientists in Europe. The modern Croatian education and science system is based on a tradition founded in 1396, when the first public university opened in Zadar. The University of Zagreb, which is today the largest, dates back to 1669. Among Croatian scientists and inventors, many have made particular contributions to international knowledge, especially Ruđer Bošković (1711–87) and Nikola Tesla (1856–1943). The former was a Jesuit mathematician, astronomer, philosopher, diplomat and poet, came to prominence by producing an atomic theory and was one of the most renowned physicists of his day. One of the craters on the Moon is named after him. The modern system of transmitting electrical energy would have been unthinkable without the inventor Nikola Tesla, who created the first hydroelectric plant on the Niagara Falls, and invented the electric motor which we find today in almost all household appliances. Other inventions which are now part of daily life, such as the tie, the parachute, the solid-ink fountain pen, the airship, the MP3 player and fingerprint identification techniques, are numbered among the products of Croatian creative minds. Scientific excellence is best recognised through the Nobel Prize, and two Croatian chemists, Lavoslav Ružička (1939) and Vladimir Prelog (1975), have been awarded it.



Culture

Always part of central European and Mediterranean cultural circles, or to be more precise, the meeting-point of Western civilisation and the East, the richness of Croatian culture testifies today to the links Croats have had with key European cultural epochs. Among the visible traces of this are six monuments in the UNESCO World Heritage List: the untouched land division (parcelisation) of an Ancient Greek field in Stari Grad on Hvar, the Classical heart of Split with the palace of the Roman emperor Diocletian, the early Christian Euphrasian Basilica in Poreč, the Romanesque centre of the town of Trogir, the early Renaissance Cathedral of St. James in Šibenik, and Renaissance Dubrovnik. Among great artists and writers, Marko Marulić (1450–1524), the “father of Croatian literature”, whose works were read throughout Europe, deserves special mention. Juraj Dalmatinac (15th century) was the greatest Croatian Renaissance sculptor and architect, Julije Klović (1498–1578) the greatest Renaissance miniaturist, Luka Sorkočević (1734–89) the first Croatia composer of a symphony, Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić (1874–1938) the “Croatian Andersen”, Ivan Meštrović (1883–1962) the most famous sculptor, and according to Rodin “the greatest phenomenon among artists”, Milka Trnina (1863–1941) the greatest opera diva, and Miroslav Krleža (1893–1981), an encyclopaedist, was in many ways the greatest Croatian writer of the 20th century. Among modern artists, Branko Lustig (1932), the producer of the Oscar-winning films *Schindler's List* and *Gladiator*, the piano virtuoso Ivo Pogorelić and the duet 2Cellos are prominent.

Society and way of life

The traditional way of life in Croatia is characterised primarily by community, which is reflected in customs, crafts and folklore, and also in eating habits, with regional cuisines becoming more and more available to foreign guests as part of the tourist range of services. Croatia is particularly proud of its top quality olive oil and selected indigenous wines. The community spirit is also seen in sports and recreation – popular ways of spending leisure time. In this sense, and due to the success of top sportsmen and women, Croatia is considered to be one of the top sporting countries of Europe. Our sportspeople have often been high profile representatives of the country; among them are the basketball player Dražen Petrović, the footballer Davor Šuker, the tennis player Goran Ivanišević, the skiers Janica and Ivica Kostelić, and the national waterpolo and handball teams.

Did you know?

It is impossible to provide an entire “cycle of knowledge” about Croatia, but it is worth mentioning that the concept describing such knowledge – the encyclopaedia – found its place in the title of a work by Croatian humanist Pavao Skalić as early as in 1559, from where it spread to all languages of the world. In a similar fashion, the neck tie (cravat), which first appeared as part of the Croatian military uniform in the form of a picturesque adornment around the necks of Croatian soldiers in the Thirty Years War, was also accepted as a mark of elegance throughout the world. Thanks to the Croatian computer programmer Tomislav Uzelac, MP3 Players have become an essential part of our everyday life. Venetian explorer Marko Polo was born too early to possess such a player, but, according to some researchers, he is connected to Croatia by his family's place of origin – the island of Korčula. The Dalmatian dog, the best known indigenous Croatian canine breed, without which the famous Disney cartoon 101 Dalmatians would never have been made, also originates from the same part of Croatia. In this chapter, you will find out many more interesting facts about Croatia... ■

<http://www.croatia.eu/article.php?lang=2&id=6>



Communicating Europe in Croatia

Trends & figures

Zvonimir Frka-Petalić
Head of Press and Public Diplomacy
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La communication gouvernementale en France : objectifs, enjeux, perspectives

This article reflects the topics covered by the S.I.G.'s representative in her intervention at the plenary meeting of the Club of Venice held in Tallinn (Estonia) on 6 June 2013. On that occasion, Nicole Civatte's contributed to the session on "The role of civil administration in public communication" focussing, among others, on three main objectives of government communication:

- re-shaping structures and enhancing coordination in an evolving context;
- analysing public opinion trends and media monitoring;
- informing on the PM and Government activities.

She also drew attention to the contradiction between the need to optimise information and the increasingly limited resources

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Le SIG :

une triple mission pérenne

- Analyser l'évolution de l'opinion publique et le traitement médiatique de l'action gouvernementale
 - Informer sur l'action du Premier ministre et du Gouvernement
 - Coordonner la communication gouvernementale
- Des dispositifs de veille et d'analyse de l'opinion et des médias
 - Le site www.gouvernement.fr
 - Un relais de l'action gouvernementale par les Préfectures
 - La coordination, le co-pilotage des études, sites et campagnes de communication des ministères

Les objectifs de la communication gouvernementale

- Promouvoir des mesures ou droits nouveaux (mesures pour l'emploi, mariage pour tous, compétitivité des entreprises...)
 - Faire évoluer les perceptions et comportements dans différents domaines (santé, environnement, sécurité routière...)
 - Favoriser le recrutement dans différents secteurs (défense, justice, éducation...)
- Une communication politique
 - Une communication institutionnelle

Des acteurs multiples

- Les ministères (34 dans le Gouvernement actuel): cabinets, directions de la communication, directions techniques (ex : Minefi)
 - Les opérateurs (plus de 30 dans le domaine de la santé)
- Des thématiques et des émetteurs nombreux (emploi, santé, environnement, économie, justice,...)
 - Des formes d'expression variées : prises de parole des ministres, relations presse, publications, sites web, évènements, campagnes publicitaires ...
 - Un enjeu de cohérence et d'efficacité

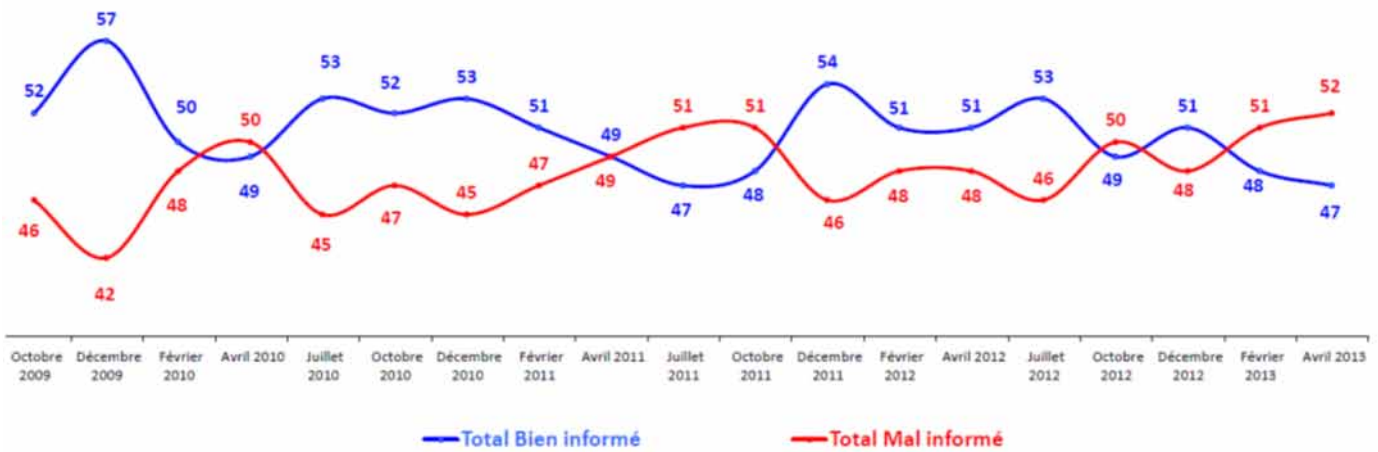
Un contexte qui évolue...

- Une baisse des moyens de communication (budgets, effectifs)
 - Des sources d'information et d'influence multiples (réseaux sociaux...)
 - Une accélération de la diffusion de l'information
 - Une évolution des pratiques de recherche et de partage de l'information
- Un environnement concurrentiel important
 - Une temporalité qui s'accélère
 - Une nouvelle relation à construire

... mais des pratiques qui demeurent

- La priorité donnée aux dépenses de fonctionnement (revues de presse, production graphique, évènement...) au détriment des campagnes publicitaires
 - Une saupoudrage des actions de communication
 - Une utilisation non optimum du digital (pas de community manager, mise en ligne in extenso des discours, captation vidéos, actualité des ministres...)
 - Une approche segmentée des publics et des sujets (ex : contrats génération, emploi d'avenir, recrutement, etc.)
 - Un manque d'évolution des métiers (community manager, veilleur, JRI, etc.)
- Une contradiction entre les besoins de communication et les moyens disponibles
 - Un décalage entre l'offre d'information et les attentes et usages des citoyens

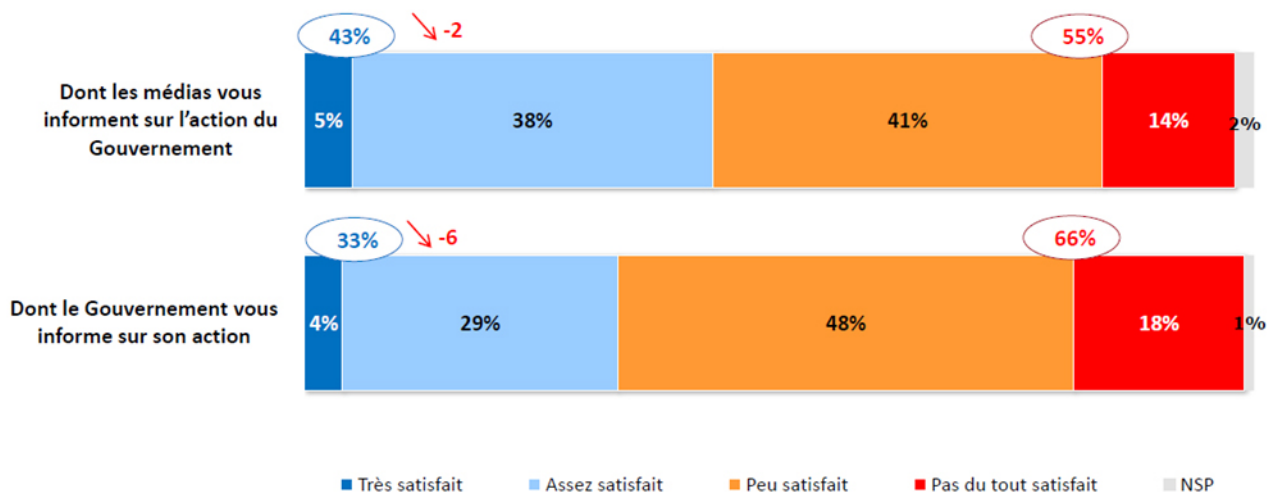
Question : « D'une manière générale, vous sentez-vous très bien, assez bien, assez mal ou très mal informé sur l'action du Gouvernement ? »



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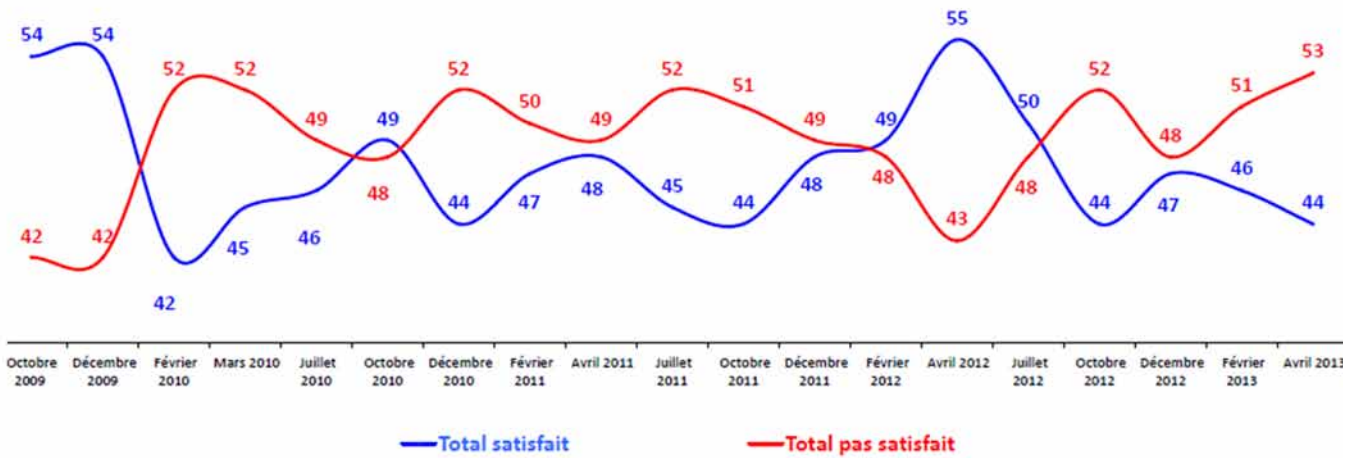
... et des besoins d'information

Question : « Nous allons maintenant parler du Gouvernement, et de la manière dont les Français sont informés au quotidien de son action. Nous ne parlons pas des campagnes de publicité. D'une manière générale, êtes-vous très satisfait, assez satisfait, peu satisfait ou pas du tout satisfait de la façon ... ? »

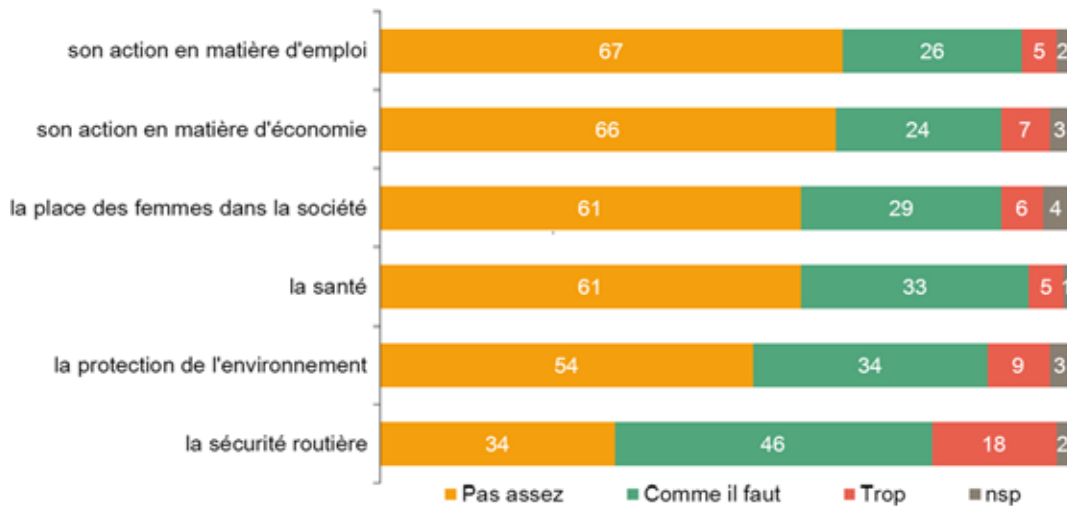


De la part des médias et du Gouvernement

Question : « Nous allons maintenant parler plus précisément des campagnes de publicité qui sont diffusées à l'initiative du Gouvernement à la télévision, dans la presse, à la radio, sur Internet ou sur des affiches, pour communiquer sur ses actions et réformes ou pour contribuer à modifier certains comportements (Sécurité routière, SIDA, contraception, etc.). Etes-vous satisfait de la manière dont le Gouvernement communique sur son action à travers les campagnes de publicité ? »



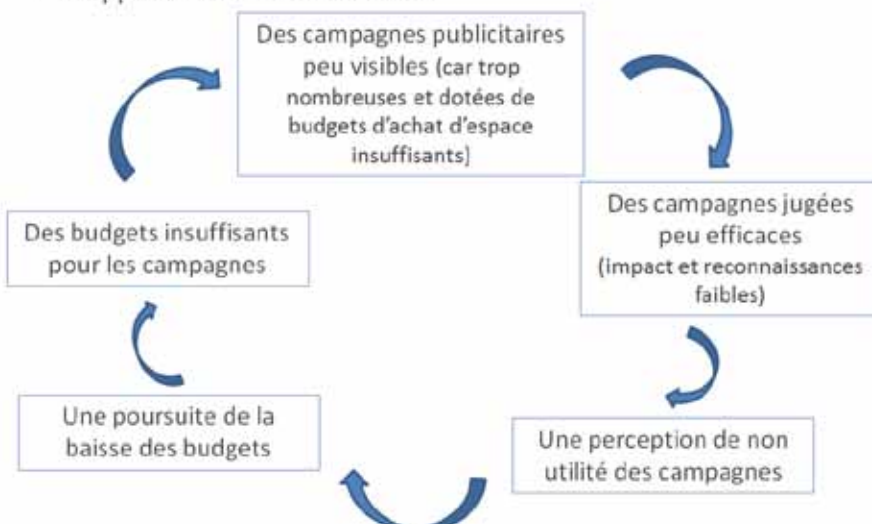
Question : Trouvez-vous que le Gouvernement communique trop, pas assez ou comme il faut sur ...



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Les enjeux de la communication gouvernementale

✓ Stopper le cercle non vertueux :



- Mettre en œuvre une communication performante avec les moyens disponibles
- Favoriser la « transition numérique » de la communication gouvernementale

- 3 leviers d'action :

- . Les campagnes
- . Le digital
- . La gestion des moyens

- Un cadre favorable : la Modernisation de l'action publique

Les campagnes de communication

Le scénario cible :

- 4 thématiques prioritaires par an dotées d'un dispositif de communication performant co-financé par les ministères et opérateurs
- Un volet publicitaire réservé à ces 4 sujets et certains types de campagnes (comportementales, recrutement)
- Une anticipation de la communication lors de l'adoption d'une mesure

- Des seuils d'émergence minimum

- Des indicateurs d'efficacité

Le digital

Le scénario cible :

- Placer le digital au cœur de la communication gouvernementale
- Mettre à disposition des contenus adaptés et serviciels
- Développer l'interactivité et les formes participatives
- Favoriser des approches interministérielles
- Développer la communication d'influence, le fact et contre-fact checking
- Lever les contraintes techniques

- Un saut quantitatif et qualitatif du digital gouvernemental

- Une logique de récepteur vs émetteur

Les moyens

Le scénario cible :

- Développer les mutualisations : études et sondages, revues de presse, hébergement des sites, production de produits web...
- Poursuivre la dématérialisation des publications avec des contenus web enrichis
- Faire évoluer les compétences : formation, recrutement, mobilité, échanges de bonnes pratiques

- Faire mieux avec moins ■



Time to embrace communication interdependence

Kevin Traverse-Healy
Club of Venice Member Emeritus

Writing in the journal *Foreign Affairs* in 1998, US academics Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye Jr discussed Power and Interdependence in the Information Age and posited that, at that time: "...futurists argue that the information revolution is leading to a new electronic feudalism, with overlapping communities laying claim to citizens' loyalties. But the state is very resilient. Geographically based states will continue to structure politics in an information age, but they will rely less on traditional resources and more on their ability to remain credible to a public with increasingly diverse sources of information."

And, here we are – in that future! At the last plenary of the Club of Venice in Tallinn, in giving some perspectives on UK government communication, I made reference to the age of deference giving way to an age of reference and now our being in an age of both reference and increasingly emotional proximity. I have been asked to expand on that thought across the European government communication perspective in order, hopefully, to give some 'food for thought and discussion' at our next plenary in Venice. So, here goes.

The term interdependence has been around since Karl Marx used it in 1848 in relation to the interdependence - as against the old world of independent - of nation states and societies and the concept has been around even longer. Global independence is recognised by us all in international commerce and in dependencies in such often contentious fields such as health, food, energy and the environment. Some states, for example, are struggling to achieve or maintain a level of independence in energy in the face of dominant behaviours from those that have the natural resources.

Bringing it across to our interests as government communicators, however, to what degree is our professional/science/art/craft impacted by interdependence? Are we able to communicate effectively with our national, regional and local publics if we remain isolated and independent of the actions of our colleagues elsewhere – in Europe or beyond? Does the need to make communication methods (tools, channels, media) and messages (information, narratives, messages) relevant and approximate (remember emotional proximity) to our audiences mean that we can discard without peril the communication, behaviours and imperatives of the societies in which we are gathered, such as Europe?

Now, before you quit reading this on the grounds that it is all so obvious, wait a bit, read on and let us discuss this in Venice – over an espresso or grappa if not in plenary. Because (and I may be wrong here), I am not sure that we have really grasped the concept of interdependence in government com-

munication across our borders – and would like to explore with you some further thoughts and possible implications of that.

First, let us look at our audiences: we will all, I think, acknowledge that the media dependency theories of the social scientists of the 1970's, such as Ball-Rokeach and DeFleur, ring pretty well as true today. Their hypothesis was that: "the more a person depends on media to meet needs, the more important media will be in a person's life, and therefore the more effects media will have on a person". If we take 'media' in its broadest sense as methods that constitute some form of communication between individuals and groups (rather than thinking about the media as the old-style press/broadcast business), I hope we will all agree that media dominates many of today's societal behaviours and these are less and less limited by time and space. So, we probably all recognise (and there is a lot of evidence from Club members that they have adopted) the value of understanding and sharing techniques of communication.

The Club itself has spent many of its sessions sharing experiences relating to developing techniques and tools of communication and receiving the benefit of wisdom shared. And, in my experience at least, this sharing is becoming embedded in the working cultures inside MS governments. I recently spent a few days with the Academy of Government Communication in Estonia (Yes, they let me back in only two months after our plenary!) and can vouch for their high level of enthusiasm for sharing and an excellent spirit of co-operation between ministries.

The South Eastern European Government Communication Conference (SEECOM) is another initiative. As I write, it is about to hold its second conference and the agenda is full of professionally useful "show and tell" subjects and top international speakers.

I am sure that members will have their own examples (some good, some less so) and I believe that the UK's executive director of government communication, Alex Aitken, will expand on the 'how to' in his plenary address in Venice.

What I want to ask us to consider is this: Great that we are doing it, but is it enough?

Sharing – as healthy and helpful as it is (and nothing I am saying should be taken in any way to discourage more and more sharing) – is not the same as acting interdependently. The foundation of Europe recognised that embracing interdependence could not only prevent inter-state conflict but also achieve significant economic and societal advantage. Over a half a century on and most recognise that a return to the iso-



lated nation state in Europe is unlikely, even impossible (although Scotland et al may yet prove me wrong!). Have we, as communicators, reflected that in what we do? Have we been leaving it to others to do so, in particular the European institutions, while concentrating on our own audiences, our 'home and hearth' and our media?

So, my fundamental questions for you to consider are these: are there, in reality, interdependencies in public sector communication as between MS in Europe? And, if there are, how do we best accommodate them in our work? Or, am I confusing this with convergences of interest/techniques that do not involve actual dependency – in which case, shall we just carry on as we are through sharing professional knowledge, skills and experience but essentially acting nation by nation?

Money, we are all too well aware, is tight – and communication can, to the uninitiated, look like a good place to start cutting back. As in each of our administrations, the institutions are under pressure and there will be difficulty in funding that which we all would like – even that which we have had. For some MS this may constitute a substantial down-sizing in funding and the loss of important projects at home. And, under such pressure, maintaining the European dimension may seem less affordable. In my view, and I hope that the Club's membership share this opinion, that would both be a great shame but it is not for me to decide what is and what is not appropriate.

I recognise the difficulties of overcoming national priorities and pressures in austerity but, if the answer to the interdependencies question above is "Yes", could we not adopt and act upon an outlook to our work that says: "Every time I consider what to do, I will consider not just my own country but the interdependence between what I do and the needs of fellow MS"?

Could we not think of tangible ways to support our fellow MS through adapting our activities to recognise that our audiences are crossing vertical, horizontal, physical and virtual boundaries all the time?

By close collaboration, can we not at least follow our audiences – perhaps, at some future time, get in front of them?

In that way, could we become and remain "credible to a public with increasingly diverse sources of information"?

Here I am going to rest and leave you frustrated and without concrete propositions or examples. I thought that I would best leave that up to you, (ok and me too) and Venice.

Salute! ■



Club of Venice Member Emeritus, **Kevin Traverse-Healy**, works in international communication strategy as a consultant specialising in government-to-public communication and delivering public policy through behaviour change. As well as TraverseHealy Consult, Kevin is chairman of Charles Barker Limited (originally founded in 1813 – one of the world's first advertising agencies) and a partner in behaviour change consultancy Equal (part of Dentsu Aegis Media). Previously, was a consultant with the UK's Central Office of Information and was an external adviser to European Commission Vice-President Wallström. He is an expert on EU funded feasibility studies and evaluations and delivers training in government communication in many countries. In 2011 he co-authored Evaluating the financial impact of public sector marketing communication and has been a visiting member of the faculty of communication science at the Università della Svizzera italiana for 16 years.

In his article you have read about Kevin's call for government communicators to recognise the interdependence of their activity (not just their skills) with those of other MS (and beyond).

In thinking it through and researching his archives, Kevin came across the attached speech given by his father Tim in 1976.

We deemed it interesting to publish here below an extract from that speech to examine whether the world has changed in the intervening years...

Tim Traverse-Healy, Senior Partner, Traverse-Healy Ltd.
Foundation for Public Relations Research and Education
Lecture to the World Public Relations Congress
Boston, Massachusetts
August 11, 1976

A declaration of interdependence

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(The speaker's preamble has been left out. Ed)

Revolution happening on all levels

[...]The adoption of novelties usually implies a degree of revolution and in this context I submit revolution is precisely what is happening worldwide on a political and social level.

As John Hargreaves and Jan Dauman have indicated, this "revolution" is taking place upon the broadest possible front and historically this is no new situation¹. At the time when the United States of America was born, a social revolution was taking place in France and an industrial revolution in England. Adam Smith wrote his "Wealth of Nations"; Lavoisier published his Advanced Chemical Treatise; the artists Goya and Pushkin were imprisoned for revolutionary activities. Nevertheless, nonconformist thought was in the ascendancy.

So too today, social, political, technical, cultural and even moral changes are taking place over a broad front. Since nowadays hardly a conference goes by without someone listing all these changes, I will not bore you on this score. But the point I wish to drive home is that it is impossible to consider them singly.

A colleague labelled the Seventies 'The Questioning Years'² and certainly today the total of established thought is being questioned at speeds which are leaving the academics, the philosophers and the theologians breathless.

Based upon a mixture of misunderstanding of the fundamental issues involved and often a desire to take a short-term tactical advantage -- the questioners often serve only to drive the machine of change, lubricated with prejudice and fuelled by sensationalism, that move much quicker and that much more dangerously along the track.

In direct opposition to these forces is the "Let Me Be/Small is Good" school. Over the post-war periods, the twin ideologies of equality and freedom have grown in direct proportion to the growth

¹ John Hargreaves and Jan Dauman, "Business Survival and Social Change," Associated Business Programmes, Prentice Hall International.

² Lord Lyons of Brighton, Institute of Public Relations Conference, 1971.

of our bureaucratic or organizational society. The frontiers of suffrage have been extended to women, the young and the non-property owners. As Katz³ pointed out to us, with the vote arrived freedom from a wide area of constraints, but with greater equity also came more rules and more regulations and a reduction of the private areas of our lives. Simultaneously, more voters have also become taxpayers.

Following closely on the rising social expectations that these ideologies created came disillusionment. The individual realizes that societies operating collectively are remote, that he has little or no say or control over policies which concern him directly, that the overall output from organizations are often contradictory to his input. The people feel cheated. The more active, more militant, therefore, have translated the individual's right to do his own thing in his own castle, in his own home, into activities in larger social settings, invoking the rights of expression when demonstrating and of equity when their activities are curtailed by officialdom.

Briefly, I would like to outline the two contradictory forces which I see at work and which, unless they can be harmonized and at least brought to run in tandem, will destroy society not only as we know it today but even as we can imagine it.

Centralization vs. laissez-faire

First the "Bigness and Closeness" movement. Evidence abounds that demonstrates the pace at which small groupings on the political, social and business fronts at the international, national and even local levels are losing power and even being forced out of existence. Fewer, more powerful political parties are emerging even with across-the-border affiliations. Social agencies are growing and proliferating, centralized control over citizens is advancing, there are more federations and bigger associations; mergers, takeovers and the formation of international and multinational companies is the order of the day. The creation of international groupings goes ahead - The European Common Market, OPEC, Organization of African Unity and so on - most of them with political muscle.

On the personal front improved educational and travel facilities, when linked to the penetrating power of the international marketers and the levelling influence of the mass communication media, have created stereotypes citizens recognize instantly.

The two social forces I have outlined are on collision course. Daily, the cohesion of individual societies and their subsystems are being reduced without a new amalgam being produced to bind them.

Just consider the short list of conflicts reported and reflected in the national daily newspapers of any one of us present here today. Centralized government versus personal freedom. Free enterprise versus mixed economy. Internationalism versus nationalism. Industrialized countries versus the developing countries. Central government versus the state. The minority versus the majority. The "haves" versus the "have nots". I want to suggest, however, that there is present in small quantities the amalgam desperately needed, and its name is "Interdependence." I believe our only hope is increased awareness of its existence, of its makeup, of how it works, of what it can do.

The fact of the matter is that today one person is dependent upon another, one sector of society on the next, nation upon nation, continent upon continent. One man's quality gain in any situation is another man's quality loss. One man's right to strike, for example, poses a threat to another man's right to work. "Interdependence" affects everyone in every walk of life everywhere. The concept of unity is not new but the present nature of our interdependence is⁴.



³ Daniel Katz, "The Rights of the Individual in Modern Society," IPRA Conference, Copenhagen, Denmark, May 1972.

⁴ "Issues and Trends," Matrix Limited Special Report, London, England, May 1976

Technically and socially, we are living in the age of a single source of supply. For example, a power failure in New York could affect the whole Eastern Seaboard. A power failure in the Southern counties of England could affect our French neighbours across the Channel who purchase our surplus energy. Cultural interdependence manifests itself in simultaneous expression. Economically and environmentally, the recent recession has provided ample evidence of the international chain of interaction. Norway's crystal clear air is being polluted, it is claimed by industrial "smog" swept across the North Sea.

Industrially, successes or failures, government or labour relations problems in one country or area intimately affect performance, plans, even livelihoods in others⁵.

Politically, abuses of power in one country erode confidence in the institutions of another, just as commercial corruption in one corporation damages the reputation of others totally innocent.

And increasingly, business is becoming concerned as to whether the corporation as it is presently manifested will survive into the next century⁶. At the same time there is increased recognition that the remedy lies in the corporation's understanding of "interdependence" and its acceptance of a new role for itself in society. As Rakash Sethi put it: "At the heart of the social responsibility movement is the gap between corporate performance and societal expectations...the Talking Stage is over and the future efforts of critics will be concentrated in evaluating actions and accountability to affected social groups... the issue is not how corporations should respond to social pressures but what their long-term role in the dynamic social system should be."⁷

Public relations has a role

I am not suggesting that, as public relations practitioners, we can bring about total awareness of the nature of "interdependence" unaided. By no means. Some problems contain elements to which no single group has the answer⁸. This is such a one - but I do believe, in all humility, that, although there is no "star" role for us to play, there is a key one.

Politicians and industrialists are, generally speaking, still organized along 19th Century lines - vertically. The nation state controls decisions. Instructions flow down and, to the extent that democracy is practiced, reactions filter upwards. On the other hand, professionals, academics and artists are 20th Century beings geared to problem solving of one sort or another and working horizontally across physical, cultural and social borders.

We [communicators] fall into this latter category. We too, are 20th Century beings geared to problem solving of one sort or another and working horizontally across physical, cultural and social boundaries. We work across borders, and more so perhaps than our professional colleagues in other disciplines, we know the pitfalls and the power of information properly communicated, of dialogue effectively established.

But I question whether we are doing everything we might to promote between rival interests, between special interests, greater understanding of viewpoints at variance, mutual understanding. Under our professional code⁹, we are ethically committed to present a "balanced" view of the organizations we represent. For us, distortion by omission ranks equally with a sin of commission. Are we in this context in our daily work doing all we should? Is it sufficient for us to calm our consciences with the thought that, irrespective of the virtues of our case, it is up to the other party to put their arguments hard and strong, but if they won't, or don't, or can't, then too bad for them and so what?

Propaganda overkill, as in real warfare, as often as not only serves to create an underground movement. I would like to put to you the idea - by no means a new one, for a great deal of work is being done in this whole area by the Centre for Conflict Analysis - that our tendency, the politicians' tendency for their purposes and the media for theirs, is more often than not to select in an even mildly conflicting situation the areas of difference or disagreement, and to hone in on these, to spotlight them.



Professor **Tim Traverse-Healy** OBE has been described as "one of the modern-day architects" of public relations practice. As a practising consultant since the late 1940s and as a full-time and visiting academic, he helped establish the UK's Institute of Public Relations, serving as its president from 1967 to 1968, and as vice-president of the European PR federation (CERP) from 1965 to 1969. He was president of the International PR Association from 1968 to 1973 and was decorated by The Queen in 1989 for his contribution to developing the profession of Public Relations.

5 Michael Duerr, "What Troubles the World's Business Leaders," Conference Board Report No. 628.

6 John Paluszek, "Business and Society 1976-2000," AMA Survey Report, 1976.

7 Rakash Sethi, professor of Business Administration, University of California, and visiting professor, School of Management, Boston University

8 Lucien Matrat, "On the Future of Public Relations," Paris, France, March 1969

9 "Code of Athens," IPRA, 1965.

The outcome is that the parties become polarized and the uncommitted are spun by the centrifugal force of publicity against the outer wall of the argument.

The fact is that when the same situation is analyzed with the emphasis on likenesses, on similarities - on the extent of the areas of agreement rather than disagreement - then peaceful solutions are more likely to emerge more quickly.

By definition, the politician represents a special interest. The media have a duty to be critical, to investigate, to report. Perhaps it would be asking too much to ask politicians and the media to act otherwise. But someone has to strike the balance. Someone, some group, has to play the part of a flywheel between the two speeding forces which I described earlier which otherwise will just crash against each other and smash the machine which we know as society.

I believe that we [communicators] could be that group and that we should act now - individually and collectively - by rallying fellow professionals in related disciplines to the task of explaining and preaching the gospel of the interdependence of man, the only message likely to save our society from self-destruction.[...]

[...] What has been called the "Nuremberg Rule" (the individual's ultimate responsibility for his own personal actions and inactions in a corporate situation¹⁰) is used not only to apply to generals and politicians but [also] is increasingly being applied today by society to administrators, managers and specialists.

When the time comes for public relations practitioners to be judged under this rule by society, by our friends and our children (and I think the time is not far ahead), then what will the verdict be? ■

This speech (and a lot more) is held at:
www.instituteforpr.org

¹⁰ Eli Goldston, "The Quantification of Concern," Fairless Memorial Lectures, 1971.



A state of sharing

Relevant trends for government communication

Erik den Hoedt
Director Public Information and
Communication Service of the Netherlands
Member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice

Every year the Dutch Information Council (VoRa), comprising the directors of Communication of the 11 Ministries, publishes a plan for government-wide communication activities on the basis of trends that are unfolding in society. This year we took an extra effort to take a close look at the trends that we and other experts think to have direct implications for government communication. We distinguished 37 trends, which we grouped into seven clusters. It is not just about new developments in the past years. Some trends have a long history, others are more predictive for the coming decade. We singled out the period from 2010 to 2020 and traced the trends with the aid of desk research and expert interviews. We have indentified them and underpinned them with sources from research agencies, planning agencies and universities. These trends reflect the Dutch situation, but I am sure that almost all are illustrative for all western countries.

The concept of 'sharing' appears in several trends: consumers borrow and lend each other things instead of buying them. Office workers share desks. Governments share tasks: to reduce public spending they transfer responsibility to market players and individuals. And the government is sharing expertise with other players; it must co-create, operate more transparently, and disclose information pro-actively. More government data are being shared so that new applicatios can be developed. Even communication itself is shared. Sometimes other organizations are better at getting the government's message across than the government itself. Why not? Our foremost task is to be an effective government. And therefore we have to adept. Sharing is also 'to let go a bit'. That's not an easy task. But it is clear that these trends and developments are calling for other leadership styles and a different role for communication – one that binds and unites. That's why the report and this article is called 'A state of sharing.'

There is not enough room in this article to discuss all 37 trends. Therefore I will address them at the level of the seven clusters. However, some of the major trends (highlighted) are described in the annex of this article. The report itself can be found here: <http://www.government.nl/documents-and-publications/reports/2013/08/30/a-state-of-sharing-relevant-trends-for-government-communication.html>

Less government, more personal responsibility – who should and can do it?

National and local government is taking more of a back seat as a result of changing tasks and public spending cuts. People are assuming more personal responsibility for sorting out their problems. This is a new scenario, which requires expectation management: in other words, the government must make perfectly clear what it does and does not represent. At the same time, it has to facilitate self-reliance and solidarity, while continuing its traditional role as a safety-net provider. People in low-skilled groups must also be afforded opportunities to contribute. Such people are less capable of participating in society and the bar for personal responsibility is very high for them.

Trends:

1. Backseat government
2. A key role for expectation management
3. More self-reliance
4. Public spending cuts affect everyone
5. Solidarity under pressure
6. The bar is high, especially for the low-skilled

From authority to network player – where do you sit in?

Traditional institutes are no longer the voice of authority, largely because people are so much better informed. A network society with more horizontal and temporary connections has emerged. Power relations are shifting inside and outside Europe and necessitating new styles of government, with the emphasis on unifying rather than hierarchical leadership. As just one of the players in the network, the government will have to find other ways of framing and communicating policy. The 'mediacracy' is set to play a pivotal role in this process as more and more debates take place in the media and on the public stage.

Trends:

7. Diminishing authority
8. Network society
9. New international power relations
10. Other styles of government
11. Mediacracy

More public disclosure – what do you share?

Society wants open government. People expect transparency about policy and accountability for motives, choices and outcomes. The government must pro-actively publish relevant information – not just in response to requests under the Freedom of Information Act (Wet openbaarheid van bestuur) – and make other data available. These ‘open’ data will not only provide a clearer idea of the workings of government but create openings for better services and new undertakings in the process.

Trends:

12. Transparency and accountability
13. From passive to active disclosure
14. Open data

An authentic story, also told elsewhere – how do you come across?

People need true leaders, individuals and organizations with a vision and a logical and coherent story. That story is being told more and more through other channels: communication partners, platforms and branded journalism. Sometimes other channels come across as more credible because they are closer to the public or to interested parties or simply because they are more logical. Communication is emerging more and more as the binding factor.

Trends:

15. Populism and fact checking
16. Need for leadership
17. Identity and authenticity
18. The government as a communication partner
19. Branded journalism
20. User-generated content
21. Communication as the binding factor

New engagement – when do people engage?

The number of initiatives that people are undertaking outside the government, especially on their own patch, is growing all the time. A sort of hands-on democracy is materializing in which people tackle issues together. People also engage via protests, solidarity and crowdsourcing. If the government wants to get something done, it would be best advised to latch on to public initiatives and facilitate input. In plain terms, government participation instead of citizen participation. If you want to influence behaviour, you should provide opportunities to this effect. New technology can assist.

Trends:

22. Hands-on democracy
23. More protests
24. Social relations: problem and pride
25. Crowdsourcing
26. Facilitating behaviour
27. New technology

Mind shift – how do we view the world?

Assets are no longer the be-all and end-all. People no longer sit back and watch the world go by when they retire. Nine-to-five is a thing of the past and we don't even have to show up at the office to get the work done. The old, long-standing institutions and lifestyles are fading and being replaced by sharing, anti-consumerism, flexible jobs and energetic senior citizens. The sharing of services and goods is a particularly strong trend. New ways of looking at the world are opening up opportunities for new styles of government.

Trends:

28. Sharing
29. Anti-consumerism
30. More working flexibility
31. Stronger elderly presence

Changing connections – how can we still reach each other?

Mobile internet is burgeoning. The tablet, amongst other things, has enhanced the importance of images and infotainment. TV is still the most popular channel of communication; second screen (viewable simultaneously on the Internet) is catching on. Established channels, such as TV and newspapers, and also word-of-mouth are still relevant. Fragmentation in the use of media is, however, necessitating a cross-medial approach in government communication in which the potential of every medium is exploited to the full. Conversation will be the central style of communication: listening, monitoring and interacting online and offline, with meaning emerging through contact and storytelling.

Trends:

32. More images and infotainment
33. Other media behaviour: mobile Internet
34. Masses of media, but traditional channels still relevant
35. Conversation as the central style of communication
36. Monitoring and webcare
37. Storytelling

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<http://www.government.nl/documents-and-publications/reports/2013/08/30/a-state-of-sharing-relevant-trends-for-government-communication.html>



Annex:

Some major trends explained

Spending cuts affect everyone

In the Netherlands economic growth has flattened out and the government budget is nowhere near in order. The need for spending cuts was therefore acknowledged by 65% of the public when the new Cabinet took office, though the perception that spending on education and care had already been dramatically reduced in the preceding years had narrowed down the support base. By the autumn of 2012 there were far fewer taboos, such as raising the state pension age and cutting mortgage interest relief. The support for spending cuts has not changed in 2013. The public understands that the books have to balance, but wants the burden to be spread fairly. Where and how heavily the axe will fall is a delicate topic. It would not be prudent for the government to intervene too fast or too rigorously. It would be best to realize efficiency improvements so that services can remain as intact as possible.

Mediacracy

The network society compiles its own problem agenda. The social media have unleashed a powerful force for controlling and influencing the government, a.k.a. peer governance, or the 'power of the people' in more prosaic terms. What is more, with civil society organizations on the decline, political debates are taking place more and more in the media. The interaction between media, citizens, interested parties, politicians and opinion pollers is growing. The Council for Social Development (RMO) calls this the 'Opinion Forum'. Stakeholders are getting involved in the political debate via letters to the media or reactions on Twitter (where it is picked up by the traditional media) or lobbying groups and thus get a chance to influence the democratic decision-making. It is thought that more than two thirds of parliamentary questions are prompted by reports in the media. At the same time, the media are being used more and more to call politicians to account (instead of Parliament alone). This underlines the circular relationship with the Opinion Forum. Whether it likes it or not, the government will have to account for its actions in the public arena.

From passive to active disclosure

Active disclosure is key, but a lot of information is still made available only upon request under the Freedom of Information Act. The Council for Public Administration (ROB) is urging the government to be more proactive in making information public and accessible. "Developments in society are leading in this direction and technological developments are making it possible," says the Council in *Gij zult openbaar maken* (Thou shalt disclose). Systematic publication of all unclassified information that the government has at its disposal will enhance the legitimacy of and faith in the government. The Council also says that the current Freedom of Information Act needs to be thoroughly reviewed. Disclosure is too passive at present and the number of FoI requests is increasing all the time. Ministers, elected representatives and public officials should be more open and learn to be less constrictive in the way they deal with government information.

Openness should serve the decision-making and opinion formation – the government should not just publish information for the sake of it. Information should offer something extra to citizens and communities. This active 'disclosure machine' should be started up and kept operational inside and outside departments. A responsive government will not be achieved without a change in culture at all levels. Communication professionals are pushing for this change and various parties will be involved in it.



Open data

The government can also enhance transparency by releasing data. People in the UK can find out more about what the government does with the taxpayer's money and get more insight into government dealings by visiting the [wheredoesmymoney-go](#) website. This kind of transparency also boosts efficiency: for example, the disclosure of the expense claims of British public servants has led to savings of 40% (Court of Audits). This fits in with the 'Vision of Open Government'.

The government is making more and more open data available for reuse. The EU is calling on member states to do the same. "Your data are worth more if you share them," says European Commissioner Kroes. These data can be used by market players to develop new services and products and can lead to new applications, such as Omgevingsalert (neighbourhood alert), an app that updates you on changes in your own neighbourhood. Transparency is thus not the only argument for open data: there are many more. For instance, open data improve services to the public and stimulate economic activity.

People also expect more tailor-made information and to be targeted more directly in services and communication. For example, the Omgevingsalert app saves them the hassle of scanning the municipal pages in the local newspapers every week to find planning permission applications that might affect them personally. But big data need to be treated with caution. This is why Marketing Online warns marketers that "Badly executed big data projects (i.e. personalized campaigns) will merely chase the consumers away".

More personalized information can conflict with legislation on the protection of personal and other sensitive data. The protection of privacy, however, no longer focuses on keeping information secret but on drawing up rules on how information should be treated. There are excellent opportunities within the legal parameters.

New technology

New technological applications can also help to change behaviour or enable citizens to engage. Apps, like BuitenBeter (Outside better), have been doing this for a while. Citizens can use BuitenBeter to report problems in the locality. A cyclist may, for instance, take a photograph of a pothole in a road or a broken streetlight and upload it via the app so that it automatically reaches the official in charge of the municipal infrastructure. This is another way in which citizens are involved in the implementation of policy.

And what about augmented reality in which virtual information is added to reality? Let's take a simplified example in the form of the notional line that is projected on a football pitch on TV to see if a player is offside. This can, of course, extend much farther. Think of projection systems in the car or spectacles that scan the surroundings – an app with image recognition that tells you in real time which buildings you see around you.

The sense of touch is also being stimulated virtually. When the telephone was introduced we could hear each other at a distance for the first time. The webcam enabled us to see each other at a distance. But now, with touch technology we can even touch things at a distance. Hug pyjamas are being marketed so that parents can hug their children when they are geographically somewhere else. Movements at one location are converted into pressure in the pyjamas which is experienced as a hug.

New technology makes things possible that were not possible before. They also raise ethical and moral questions. Will our morals adapt to what is possible? Or will we resist? Here lies a task for the government. Not as the moral gatekeeper, but as a partner to the public.



Other media behaviour: mobile internet Masses of media, but traditional channels still relevant

PR agency Lindblom sees mobile Internet as the greatest game changer of the decade. We are online all the time, wherever we are. There are more smartphones and more tablets. Watching TV online has trebled within a year (between the end of 2011 and the end of 2012). The number of people who own a tablet has also trebled during this period (Intomart).

Mobile is 'exploding'. Mobile applications are more important than website building, says Dorresteijn from Studio Dumber. The requirements are a responsive design, interactivity, layered information, a small scale and accessibility. Short, clear communication is a more or less technical requirement. Rijksoverheid.nl (the communication website of the Dutch Central Government) is also being made responsive: the content will be the same as for the desktop version but it will be arranged differently. Another trend is that Google, Facebook and LinkedIn will keep developing. Google can follow its users closely and analyse data so that it can place personalized advertisements (big data). Search-engine marketing is also increasing and returns and conversion are getting more important. More attention will be paid to cyber security as the vulnerability of online media becomes more visible. Attacks have already been launched on banks and government websites such as Digi-D and Rijksoverheid.nl.

The traditional channels (television and conversation) are still relevant. The role of social media in the formation of opinions on politics and government policy is still fairly limited in terms of penetration and appreciation. Important disseminators of information are NOS Journaal, nu.nl (especially among the youth) and RTL Nieuws as well as newspapers, teletext and door-to-door magazines. Relevant opinion shapers are Kassa, Radar, DWDD and Pauw&Witteveen. The television programmes are therefore still well represented. The importance of conversations should also not be underestimated.

The fragmentation of media use is calling for a cross-medial approach in government communication which is capable of harnessing the power of every medium. Each medium caters to a different social need: newspapers and magazines make people start discussions, radio and television are more for entertainment and passing the time, and social media offer opportunities for interaction and for keeping up-to-date passively. TV continues to be important to a broad group and to certain segments of the population such as the low-skilled. Television is good for passive use of information but always in conjunction with other channels of expression. More use will have to be made of social media, but online is not the ultimate solution: it is more difficult to reach the low-skilled groups via the Internet because they use it mainly for chatting and entertainment, not for information, education or participation. The one cannot replace the other; what is needed is a mix.

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Continuous monitoring and listening and responding in networks are important. Only when you are up to speed with what is going on, can you respond adequately to needs. The trick is to latch on to continuous interaction and offer personalized information. Basically, the trend is shifting from a communication boost to more ongoing communication. The government is spending less on media because – amongst others – there are fewer mass media campaigns. The focus in the follow-up to an RTV campaign is on interaction: the channels and the message are adjusted to suit individuals or groups. ■



Reinventing public sector communication in South Eastern Europe

Vuk Vujnovic

A detailed outcome of the conference will be posted in the next number of "Convergences"

The concept of the SEECOM Forum, an informal group of top government communication officials in South Eastern Europe, is based on the collective belief of its members that there is infinitely much more to government (public sector) communication than simply informing the public or "getting your message across", as the phrase goes.

The SEECOM Forum's credo is that providing easy access to public information, presenting public policies in a simple and understandable way, encouraging dialogue between public authorities and citizens and enabling public participation in policy making will inevitably improve the quality of governance and policy making and promote democracy in the best interest of the people.

The Forum was founded in September 2012, when senior government communicators from 9 countries of South Eastern Europe met in Budva, Montenegro, to adopt what was arguably Europe's first transnational declaration of key professional and ethical principles of government communication.

This unorthodox document, called the Budva Declaration, proclaims that it is the responsibility of government communicators not only to provide the public with comprehensive, truthful and timely information on government activities, but also to strive to keep governments open, accessible, and understandable to the publics and, perhaps most importantly, attract public interest in government work, enable direct communication between government and citizens and encourage citizen participation in policy making.

By no means an easy feat for civil servants bound by the rules and structures of traditional top-down approach to policy making!

Fortunately enough, the SEECOM Forum members have been blessed with the generous peer support from some of Europe's and world's most seasoned and most prominent public sector communicators.

The SEECOM Forum is particularly indebted to the Club of Venice leaders and members who generously offered to share their vast experience and expertise with the Forum and help it grow and develop in the future. Furthermore, SEECOM Forum members have been given an unprecedented opportunity to join the United States National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC), an offer never before extended to any individual or group outside the United States.

Equally important has been the endorsement and support from the Forum's international partners Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Media Programme South East Europe, Regional Cooperation Council, UNDP Montenegro and US Embassy in Montenegro, and its host, the Government of Montenegro.

The SEECOM Forum members will meet again this fall, at the 2nd South Eastern European Government Communication Conference, taking place in Budva, Montenegro, from 27-29 September 2013, in order to reinforce their commitment to the common values enshrined in the Budva Declaration and discuss the best ways of putting them into practice.

The 2013 SEECOM conference promotes the idea of government communication as public service, bound by the clear ethical and professional standards, rather than the art of "selling" public policies and projects to "target audiences".

Clearly, the pursuit of this concept involves a fundamental change in what is traditionally viewed as the role of government communication.

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Vuk Vujnovic currently serves as Acting Head of Public Relations at the Government of Montenegro. He was one of the originators and founders of the SEECOM Forum, an informal group of top government communication officials from 9 countries of South Eastern Europe.

Vuk developed a number of initiatives and projects aimed at using public communication to promote the principles of open government and encourage greater public participation in policy making, including the Citizens' Voice, South Eastern Europe's first government e-petition website. He is a member of the Club of Venice and the first European member of the United States National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC).

In order to be able to cater to the needs of the new era of empowered citizens, who are the true opinion leaders and the movers and shakers of today's globalised and interconnected world, the modern government communicators need to become the voice of the people within their institution, just as much as they are the institution's voice to the outside world. Besides, they need to play the role of policy advisors to their leaders and make sure that the voice of the people is heard and taken into account when policies are made.

Another important aspect of the 2013 SEECOM plenary meeting is an initiative to solidify the structure of the SEECOM Forum and ensure its sustainability by establishing a regional non-for-profit association of public sector communicators.

If everything goes to plan and the new association is established in Budva, Montenegro, this fall, it will seek to accomplish its mission through a variety of exchange programs and projects aimed at advancing:

- professional development, exchange, networking and acknowledgement of professional achievements and best practices
- citizen engagement through two-way communication and fostering of civil society and citizen participation in public policies
- partnership with non-governmental actors, first and foremost media and civil society organizations
- good governance through transparency, accountability and free and easy access to information in public sector
- internal communication in public sector
- professional standards, values and ethics of public sector communication
- use of innovation and new technology in public sector communication

To conclude on a more personal (if not utterly heretical) note – the SEECOM initiative is, in my mind, simply an effort by a group of government communicators in South Eastern Europe to capture the global trend in which communication is becoming an inextricable part of policy making, “the fifth pillar of democracy” if you will – a public service whose chief responsibility is to give citizens more say in the complacent dynamics of checks and balances between “the four pillars” (legislature, executive, judiciary and press).

Therefore, if policy makers are to create public policies that are truly attuned to the dynamics of today's world and attentive to people's actual needs, communication can be nothing short of an inherent part of policy making and – why not say it – democracy. ■



Friday, 27 September 2013

- 17:00 – 18:00 Plenary opening session : Government Communication as Public Service
Welcome notes :
Mr Duško Marković, Deputy Prime Minister of Montenegro
Mr Rastislav Urbensky, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Montenegro
Mr Douglas Jones, Deputy Chief of Mission, United States Embassy to Montenegro
Mr Frank Priess, Deputy Head of European and International Cooperation, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS), Berlin
Mr Jovan Tegovski, Chief of Staff, Regional Cooperation Council
Moderator : Vuk Vujnović, Public Relations Bureau of the Government of Montenegro

Saturday, 28 September 2013

- 09:00 – 10:30 Panel A : Ideal Government Communication Office – Myth or Reality?
Panelists :
Erik den Hoedt, Director of the Public Information and Communication Office, Government of the Kingdom of Netherlands
John Verrico, President-Elect of U.S. National Association of Government Communicators, United States
Jens Teschke, Spokesman / Head of Communications, Federal Ministry of Interior, Germany
Krunoslav Vidić, Spokesman, Ministry of Labour and Pension System, Government of Croatia
Nebojša Regoje, Head of Public Relations Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Moderator : Vuk Vujnović, Public Relation Bureau of the Government of Montenegro
- 11:00 – 12:30 Panel B : Government 2.0
Panelists :
Robert Bjarnason, President & Gunnar Grímsson, CEO , Citizens Foundation, Iceland
Adrian Rosenthal, Head of Digital and Social Media, MSL Germany
Lilia Gurez, Former Head of Communication and Media Relations Department, Government of Moldova
Moderator : Christian Spahr, Director of KAS Media Program South East Europe
- 12:30 – 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 – 15:30 Panel C : Government as a two-way conversation
Panelists :
Anthony Zacharzewski, CEO, Democratic Society, United Kingdom
Giulio Quaggiotto, UNDP Regional Centre in Bratislava
Vuk Vujnović, Public Relations Bureau, Government of Montenegro
- 16:00 – 17:30 Panel D : Communicating EU to Citizens
Panelists :
Jane Morrice, Vice President of the European Economic and Social Committee, EU
Ivana Đurić, Assistant Director, Communications and Training Department, European Integration Office, Government of Serbia
Matjaž Kek, National Coordinator for the European Year of Citizens Government of the Republic of Slovenia
Ognian Zlatev, Head of the European Commission Representation in Bulgaria
Moderator : Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary General, Club of Venice
- 18:30 – 22:00 Group Photo
Guided Tour of the Town of Budva
Dinner hosted by Mr Ljubomir Filipović, Deputy Mayor of Budva

Sunday, 29 September 2013

- 9.00 – 10:00 Workshop : Engaged Speaker, the Art of Effective Public Speaking
Trainer : Joan Detz, public speaking specialist, United States
- 10:15 – 11:30 Creating a Regional Association
- 11:30 – 12:00 Closing of the Conference
Closing Remarks :
Christian Spahr, KAS Media Program South East Europe
Dinka Živalj, Regional Cooperation Council
Nadica Dujović, UNDP Montenegro
- 12:00 – 13:30 Farewell Lunch

Social media in public communication Time to move ahead

Niels Jørgen Thøgersen
Hon. Vice-president of the Club of Venice
kimbrer@gmail.com

Social media have been on the agenda of the Club for years. Since 2008 we have organized 8 special working groups/seminars concentrated on different aspects of social media. External experts have been invited to make contributions, and most members from the member states and the institutions have been very active too.

44 What should be the next steps?

The world moves on – not least the communication world. So the Club of Venice also has to move on in the field of social media. I see four important initiatives we should take. The purpose should be to make us all more professional, more up-to-date with developments and challenges in this important field. And to learn much more efficiently from each other.

1. We have to create **ON-LINE MEETING FORA** for Club members, where we can meet more often to tackle specific topics. Video meetings when possible. This reduces costs and saves us all time. And technically it is fairly easy to do and very cheap
2. We must find ways to organize **TRAINING** in the use of social media in public communication. Joint operations – often on-line. Concentration on the most important parts of the work
3. We should find efficient ways to be up-front in our operational knowledge about **NEW DEVELOPMENTS** at all times. Web 3.0, credible web polling, communication around voting on the web, on-line monitoring of TV and radio in real time, how to mobilize people via the web, etc. etc.
4. We could try to develop a frequently updated operational list of “**10 GOLDEN RULES ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN PUBLIC COMMUNICATION**”





How to do it?

To kick off our debate in one of my four suggested initiatives I want to add this:

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What could the 10 GOLDEN RULES be?

1. Make the active use of social media the rule – not the exception. Integrate them fully in your communication strategy at all levels
2. Involve in principle all staff – not only a few people in the communication department. And organize an ongoing training for them. Have a small and efficient in-house back-up help for them
3. Present your use of social media as a new Service to the public – not as just another political or bureaucratic gimmick
4. Use the straight forward language of the internet – not heavy-handed language like Euro-speak. Soft and sweet. A sense of humor always makes any message pass more easily
5. Make sure that all staff is aware that they are “government” – not just representing themselves. This needs special attention in their training
6. Ensure that your use of social media are fully integrated in and coordinated with your website, events of your departments and your media initiatives
7. Remember that photos and small videos often communicate much better than text
8. When planning the contents and the timing of your use of social media give a top priority to stimulate the viral effect of it, meaning that your readers and contacts send your information and message on to many others in their networks
9. Be straightforward and honest in your communication. If you cannot tell everything, never lie. And don't be afraid of admitting mistakes. Do admit them very quickly and clearly.
10. Monitor the effect (successes and failures) in your use of social media efficiently and at all times. And adapt your initiatives and activities accordingly. ■

Evolution and application of the Semantic Web 3.0 among the EU

The information world is changing, quickly and without pauses. It is hardly possible to follow such a variety of revolutionary changes which are re-designing at an impressive speed the culture of the internet and the strategic approach of public communicators who are called to play a crucial role in this revolutionary period. Change management and adaptation of competences and working methods are the right recipe.

Throughout the recent twenty years we have quickly experienced:

- Web 1.0 (mere research and optimisation of “information connection”), where internet was more of a static information source,
- Web 2.0 (with the continuous technological improvement leading to discover “people connection”), and today still the mostly exploited framework, with increasing interactivity and astonishing users’ creativity in designing and enhancing the structure of the content online.

Since a few years ago we have started transit towards Web 3.0 (knowledge connection), also called the “semantic web” or “human machine”, where experts aim to “decrease humans tasks and decisions”, allowing a higher content organisation of material as well as the social web communities organisation.

It is important to note that “Web 3.0” has inevitably many different definitions. As it happens in almost all fields of computer technology, the web is constantly evolving so “Web 3.0” should not be considered as a strict, “pre-packed” definition but rather an abstract term opening new and new perspectives, by means of an ever evolving collection of ideas.

It is worth recalling that the Club of Venice took Web 3.0 on its agenda already in early spring 2010, as it deemed appropriate to start focusing on this important step in the web evolution, on its main characteristics and on its potential impact on the information provision, on the communication strategies and on internautes’ attitudes.

What will happen next? While still concentrating on the new “pro-semantic” reality, next objective of the web is to optimise computers’ capacity and have them “understand the content and the information they contain”. What does this mean? Well, if Web 2.0 was able to connect people, it is now time, under the Web 3.0, to...connect computers between them, by enabling them to “[re-]elaborate and understanding the content and digest and [re-]modeling the information they contain

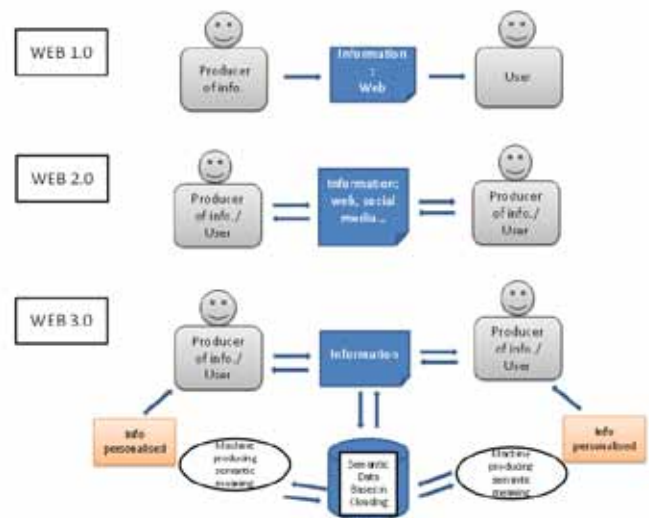


Diagramme of the process from Web 1.0 to Web 3.0

The seminar organised on this domain by the Club aimed to reflect on this evolution and focus on how public authorities and international institutions such as the EU were coping with this new trends and how they could adapt quickly to such a rapid development. Are the governments and International organisations such as EU taking advantage of the “Web 3.0 world” to interact with citizens? How does new, semantically-oriented technology facilitate communication with stakeholders?

This matter was also at the center of discussions by members of the Club and external specialists in the seminars held in Brussels on 2012 and 2013 and also covered in the previous two numbers of the Club review “Convergences” (Dec 2012 and May 2013), where attention was drawn to the need for governments and the world of diplomacy as a whole to strengthen links with citizens, using by all means the new technology, and foster their engagement in policy-building and public life.

While many private organisations are making giant leaps to make progress in this area as quickly as possible, it is worth mentioning that also the EU is playing a big role in this context. It is worth to mention that, already in 2008, the European Commission introduced the debate about the so-called “Information Revolution”, launching a public consultation concerning the project to make a transition to Web 3.0. According to the consultation’s results, to jump on the train of “the Internet of the future” means that “Europe must have the know-how and the network capacity to lead this kind of transformation. We must make sure that “Web 3.0 is made and used in Europe” meaning also business (“anytime, anywhere business”). In this context, the Commission call aimed to focus on the importance of providing an effective technology and highly performing internet access, being concepts & technologies only possible if high-speed internet is available to everyone.

More recently, in concrete terms, in 2010 the Commission created the so-called “Digital Agenda” (with Commissioner Neelie Kroes’ strong supporter), which contains an online platform called “Futurium”. Using the 3.0 model, but still in development, this project facilitates the participation of citizens by in a web zone where users can write their contributions and hold brainstorming meetings contributing to the future European policies.



Also called “collective brain”, the use of this tool could indeed enable stakeholders and policy makers to maintain and optimise connections and build the European future together. In the context of the Digital Agenda and its flagship initiatives envisaged to help Europe attain its primary goals to start with getting out of the crisis, it is essential “to maximise the social and economic potential of ICT” as a way of increasing the link between the citizens and the governments, contribution to a growing economy, and a long-term prosperity. By means of collective work, the above-mentioned web platform asks citizens, in parallel to the experts, to evaluate ongoing trends and express themselves on their vision of the future of the EU and engage in co-developing policies. This collaboration could have a real impact on removing barriers between citizens and policy makers or at least create a space where stakeholders can inter-

act and also participate on major issues at stake (as it already happens in some pilot experiences in a number of EU countries). The way to developed and link the communication and the policy are still in process, while technology gurus and dedicated specialists have already started pronouncing themselves on how to develop news systems such as the Web 4.0.

The future 4.0...

...is seen by communication experts as the “symbiotic web” as the “interaction between humans and machines in symbiosis”, a step forward to the “public and private” share by the “Cloud Computing”, which will also have enormous consequences on business. This is definitely a step forward to new technologic advancements, but many could argue that this is pure “fantastic” digital. However, the challenge is still ahead for communication specialists. The Club of Venice will continue to update its Members on this challenging issues.

The development of the world of Internet and, most recently, the explosion of social media have been on the agenda of the Club of Venice for years. Since 2008 the Club has organized, on average on a semi-annual basis, in cooperation with the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU and the Belgian and UK Government, eight special working groups/seminars concentrated on different aspects of social media. Moreover, internet and multimedia sessions have also been hosted in the Club plenary sessions. The agenda of such events was enriched with the presence of distinguished external experts, specialists from Members States and institutions, academics, bloggers and journalists. The Club envisages to pursue its activities in this domain in spring 2014. ■

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http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-08-1422_en.htm
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Lucía Romeu Leder is currently undergoing an internship at the Directorate-General F (Communication and Transparency), Public Relations Unit at the Council of the European Union. Born in Barcelona, she studied Arts and Information and Communication at the University of Nouvelle-Sorbonne in Paris and realised a one-year international exchange at the UDK University in Berlin. Moreover, Lucía has experienced other successful internships in Paris, Berlin and Brussels contributing to the development of the social media culture and communication strategies of several associations and companies related with culture and social affairs.

Communicating Europe's added value

Peter Lindvald-Nielsen
Head of Communication,
European Economic and Social Committee

For the seventh year in a row, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is organising its civil society media seminar for communications experts and national and international media specialists. It will be held on 25 and 26 November at the Committee's headquarters, and will focus on effective ways of communicating the added value of the EU.

The seminar will be divided into four parts: branding and European image-building, communicating the cost of non-Europe, new media and electoral communication.

In the first part, speakers will try to assess the usefulness of corporate brand strategies for the EU and stimulate a discussion between corporate strategists and those who say that Europe cannot be compared to a product as it lacks the clarity and impact of a corporate brand. Proponents of the view that the image of an organisation or political construction should be built on what it actually "delivers" will also have their say in this discussion.

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The second part, focusing on ways of communicating the cost of non-Europe, will look into the benefits and drawbacks of communicating this storyline as compared to more traditional communications focused on success stories. Since communicating the cost of non-Europe seems to be, at least partly, about putting a positive spin on what may seem to be a negative message, the discussion panel will look at best practices from crisis communications.

The third part of the seminar will examine the impact of the changing media landscape on public communication. Although this new landscape, which is characterised by a plethora of channels and platforms, the growing importance of citizen journalism and a staggering amount of content, is fascinating, it is also challenging, not least for public communicators. Various approaches to this new environment will be discussed.

Given that the European elections, due in May 2014, are fast approaching, the fourth part of the conference will look at the effectiveness of various electoral communications strategies aimed at increasing voter turnout and engaging with voters. Speakers and participants will address questions on running the best EU-wide communications campaign, responding to voter prejudices about the EU and framing messages for maximum impact.

Speakers from political circles, media and civil society organisations will address these questions and many others.

We are hoping to see some of the Venice Club Members participate actively in the event

The seminar is being organised in cooperation with the European Parliament.

To find out more, visit our website eesc.europa.eu or e-mail us at: pressofficers@eesc.europa.eu. ■

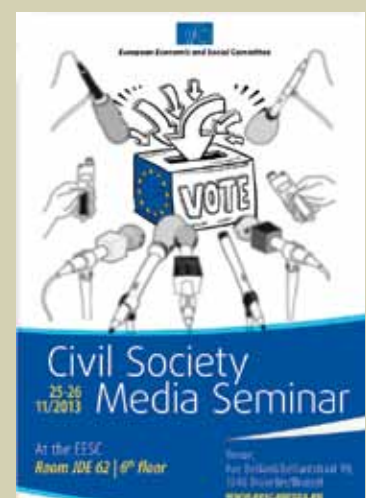
Towards the EP elections

Communicating the added
value of Europe

7th Civil Society Media
Seminar

EESC, Brussels

25-26 November 2013





Structure of the seminar

Monday, 25 November 2013

- 09:00 - 09:30 Registration of participants
- 09:30 - 11:00 Opening session
- 11:00 - 11:15 Coffee break
- 11:15 - 13:00 European image building
- 13:00 - 14:30 Buffet lunch
- 14:30 - 17:00 Communicating the cost of non-Europe
- 18:30 - 20:00 Visit of the Parliamentarium
- 20:30 - 22:30 Networking dinner

Tuesday, 26 November 2013

- 9:15 - 11:00 Impact of the changing media landscape on public communication
- 11:00 - 11:15 Coffee break
- 11:15 - 12:45 Political and electoral communication: European and national
- 12:45 - 13:00 Concluding remarks
- 13:00 - 14:30 Buffet lunch

Welcome and opening interventions

- Jane Morrice, Vice-President, EESC
- Key note panel: Jane Morrice, EESC Vice-President in charge of communication, exchanges views on the challenge of instilling renewed public trust in a troubled European project.
Suggested discussant: Guy Verhofstadt, MEP, Former Prime-Minister of Belgium (tbc)

European image-building: lessons from public diplomacy and corporate branding

Suggested speakers include:

Key note speech by Simon Anholt, editor of the quarterly journal, Place Branding & Public Diplomacy, and founder of the renowned City Brands index. He is regarded as one of the world's leading specialists in creating brand strategies for countries, cities and regions

Discussion panel

- Anthony Gooch Galvez, Director of Public Affairs & Communications, OECD (tbc)
- XXX, a member of the board of Marca España, which is the Spanish state policy aimed at "improving the image of our country both domestically and beyond our borders for the common good". (tbc)

Moderator: Cveto Stantič, EESC Member, Employer's Group, Adviser to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia

Communicating the cost of non-Europe

Key-note speech by: Giorgios Dassis, President of the EESC Workers' Group and Luca Jahier, President of the EESC Various Interests' Group, rapporteurs for the EESC opinion "Towards an updated study of the cost of non-Europe"

Discussion panel

- Éva Gergály Lucács, Head of Public Affairs Unit, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Hungary (tbc)
 - Martin Callanan, MEP, European Conservatives and Reformists Group. (tbc)
 - Jacek Krawczyk, President of the EESC Employers' Group
- Moderator: Béatrice Ouin, EESC Member, Journalist and Head of Mission, International and European Department of the French Democratic Confederation of Labour (CFDT)

Impact of the changing media landscape on public communication

Key note speech by:

Jon Worth, political blogger, EU affairs expert and co-founder of Bloggingportal.eu, an EU affairs blogging aggregator. He is also a partner of techPolitics LLP, a small agency dedicated to social media strategy and training for politics.

Discussion panel:

- Jaume Duch Guillot, European Parliament's Spokesman and Director for Media (tbc)
- Igor Schwarzmann, Co-founder of Third Wave, a Berlin-based digital think tank and strategy consultancy.

Suggested moderator: Thierry Libaert, EESC Member, Professor – Paris Institute of Political Studies (Sciences Po)

Political and electoral communication: European and national

Introduction by Juana Lahousse-Juárez, Director-General of Communication for European Parliament. She will oversee the development and implementation of the European Parliament's communication strategy for the 2014 elections

Suggested speakers include:

- Sixtine Bouygues, Director for Communication at the European Commission (tbc)
- Reijo Kemppinen, Director General, Press, Communications, Transparency, Council of the EU (tbc)
- Xxx, a Brussels-based correspondent

Suggested moderator: Juana Lahousse-Juárez, Director-General of Communication for European Parliament

Concluding remarks

- Jane Morrice, Vice-President, European Economic and Social Committee
- Anni Podimata, Vice-President, European Parliament ■

EuroPCom 2013: Public communication in period of (EU) elections

Tom de Smedt
Administrator, Directorate for Communication,
Press and Events, Committee of the Regions

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How to raise public awareness for the importance of next year's EU elections? Can more, better of other communication lead to a higher voters' turn-out? And more in general: what is the role of public communicators at all levels of governance in a period of elections? These are the topics on the agenda of EuroPCom 2013. At this 4th European Conference on Public Communication, about 700 experts will discuss the future of government communication.

"This time it's different". This is one of the key messages of the European Parliament's communication campaign for the 2014 elections. The communication approach will also be different to that of previous elections, aiming at a high level of involvement from communicators at local level. But this will be a major challenge, as illustrated by a recent study by the Committee of the Regions and the Catholic University in Leuven: communicators of regional and city administrations are very reluctant in their support to the election campaign, and often lack the resources to invest more in EU communication.

This will be one of the central themes of the EuroPCom conference, to be held on 16 and 17 October in Brussels. But the meeting will also focus more in general on the role and position of public communication in period of elections, as in many member states the European Parliament elections are held alongside national, regional or local elections. Such election periods place additional pressure on public communications professionals. Politicians and citizens are constantly looking for new platforms for debate and interaction. The press and other stakeholders are following policies with increasing interest. Communicators need to find the right balance between their sense of ethics and their loyalty towards their current and future political hierarchy.

No matter how different the political and communication cultures may be, European public communicators all share the same common concerns. The annual EuroPCom conference contributes to the in-depth debates on those professional challenges. 700 communicators from EU, national, regional and local administrations will share their expertise, together with more than 70 expert speakers.

Among the speakers are Matthew McGregor (director of rapid response on Obama's 2012 re-election campaign), Johan Peter Paludan (of the Copenhagen Institute of Futures Studies), Anthony Zacharzewski (of the Democratic Society) and Simon Anholt (independent government adviser). The opening debate will give the floor to Ramón Luis Valcárcel (President CoR), Anni Podimata (Vice-President EP), Mercedes Bresso (Vice-President CoR), Vytautas Leškevičius (Lithuanian Minister for European affairs), Henri Malosse (President EESC) and Gregory Paulger (Director-General Communication, EC).

EuroPCom is organised by the Committee of the Regions, in partnership with the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Council of the EU, the Lithuanian EU Presidency, the European Economic and Social Committee and the members of the EuroPCom Advisory Board. ■





Wednesday 16 October 2013

- 10:00-11:00 Registration
11:00-13:00 Plenary opening session
From bailout to ballot
13:15-14:30 Lunch
14:30-15:45 **A1** Campaigning for Europe
B1 Online public communication: from tools to strategies
C1 Public communication and politics
15:45-16:00 Coffee break
16:00-17:30 **A2** European elections going local
A3 Candidates going European
B2 Conversation session: It's all about social
B3 e-government, e-citizens, e-lusions?
C2 Putting communication on the policy agenda
17:45-18:15 Key note lecture
Perspectives for public communication and citizen engagement
18:15-19:30 Networking drink

Thursday 17 October 2013

- 09:30-10:30 **D** Monitoring and evaluating strategies and campaigns
E1 Strengthening your administration's reputation
F1 Storytelling in public communication
E2 Administrators or ambassadors?
E3 Reputation of the EU institutions
F2 Talking about EU projects
F3 Conversation session: What's your story?
10:30-11:45 Coffee break
11:45-12:00 Plenary closing session
12:00-13:00 Public communication: the way ahead
13:00 Lunch

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Venue:
European Parliament (Wednesday morning) and Committee of the Regions (Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning)

Detailed programme brochure:
www.cor.europa.eu/europcom

Information and online registration:
www.cor.europa.eu/europcom

europcom@cor.europa.eu

Twitter: @europcom2013 or #europcom



Act. React. Impact.

This time it's different

On September 10 2013, a day before José Manuel Durao Barroso gave his State of the EU speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, Vice-presidents Anni Podimata and Othmar Karas officially launched the institutional communication campaign for the European elections 2014 under the motto "This time it's different – Act. React. Impact"¹. In an unprecedented event of this kind, over 160 journalists attended what was described as possibly the busiest EP's press conference, streamed live in all the EU official languages, and witnessed the unveiling of the centrepiece of this kick-off event, the so-called Humanifesto film, setting the tone of the campaign that is to roll out in the coming year. At the time of writing this article, the Humanifesto has been viewed online over 5 million times.

What was launched on September 10 is the first of a four phase campaign conceptually devised for over a year, through extensive research on the EU's citizens' concerns and attitudes towards the EU, what the Parliament could offer to address these concerns and, ultimately, to identify what topics interest whom, where these people are and what are the most effective tools to convey the Parliament's messages taking into consideration that the institution needs to communicate in 24 official languages, in 28 Member States with a budget of 16 Mio euros – i.e. 0,03 cent per citizen.

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Why this time it's different

An election is a political act both on the part of citizens, who use it to express their political preferences, and in its consequences, whereby their elected representatives set the political direction of the institutions in accordance with the outcome of the election. It is vital that any institutional communication campaign about the elections reflect the political nature of the process and the political stakes inherent in the outcome.

At the same time, an institutional campaign must remain scrupulously neutral and impartial vis-à-vis all the political forces contesting the election. It must therefore draw attention to the political nature of the process, the importance of the choices before the electorate and the consequences they will have without implying any value judgement or preference between them.

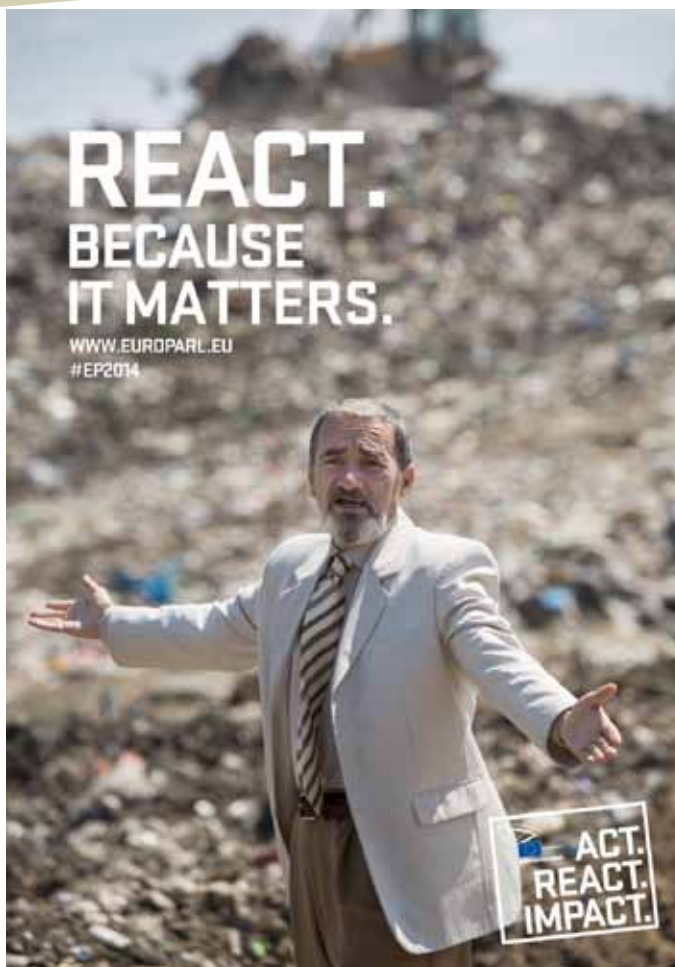
The Lisbon-mandated "europeanisation" of the elections, and the direct consequences of the parliamentary outcome on the composition of the executive, are game-changing factors which the institutional campaign cannot but take into account.

This time it's different for many reasons: the economic context, the lack of trust in public institutions, the increased legislative powers of the European Parliament, the Europeanization of the political debate across the Member States, the new EU business model where decisions taken at EU level have immediate effect on citizens' lives through, for example, the European Semester. Finally, the stakes are higher since, as recommended by the European Parliament in its resolution of 4 July 2013, European Political Parties will be nominating, ahead of the elections, their candidates to be the next President of the European Commission, thus, creating a deeper link between the choices of the citizens as expressed in the outcome of the elections and the future legislative agenda of the Union.

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/top-stories/content/20130902TST18451/html/Act-React-Impact>

Act. React. Impact. – a baseline for the institution and citizens alike

The European Parliament's information campaign seeks in its first phases to create awareness and understanding among citizens of the new reality that is the European Parliament and to encourage them to engage with it. The campaign acknowledges and faces up to the daily issues confronting Europeans and emphasises the idea that by all of us working together we can make a genuine impact on citizens' lives. This notion is translated in the baseline ACT. REACT. IMPACT. From both sides, Parliament and citizens, there's room for acting, reacting and making an impact.



The campaign concept and phases

The institutional information campaign that began in September endeavours to respond to the new circumstances in which the elections will take place, with a single campaign which will evolve through a series of phases starting now and concluding when the immediate consequences of the election have been played out. These phases are:

- **Kick-off phase (September–October 2013):** Establishing the look and feel of the campaign in a launch phase emphasising the new powers of the Parliament and the new empowerment of citizens through it.
- **Thematic phase (October 2013–February 2014):** Raising awareness of the political nature of Parliament, the added value it brings and its impact on daily lives, through a series of broad political themes. On-going legislative and other activities will be used to illustrate how political outcomes are reached and the impact they have. This phase will be an opportunity to take stock of the decisions taken by the Parliament in the course of this term but will also include a forward looking aspect, highlighting what challenges lie ahead in the upcoming legislative with a view of explaining some of the issues that citizens can influence through their participation in the democratic process. Five “themes” have selected, fitting the concerns of citizens today: jobs, money, economy, quality of life and EU in the world.
- **Pre-vote phase (March–May 2014):** Raising awareness of the upcoming election, its date and the choice facing voters, emphasising the power of citizens to decide “who’s in charge”. The campaign should help citizens understand the power that this election places in their hands to get the Europe they want. The Parliament wants to amplify the movement of informed and engaged citizens by convincing them that they can choose the political direction of Europe. That they can act to make an impact.
- **Post-vote phase (May 2014 onwards):** Communicating the outcome of the elections, the new composition of Parliament, the composition of the new executive power and the consequences for the direction of policy in the EU.

The tonality of the campaign, established through the language and imagery used is designed to reflect the real-world environment in which the elections take place, one characterised by economic crisis, hardship for many and a widespread sense of anger and frustration among citizens as to the course of political events. The moment does not call for saccharine optimism, bubble-gum colours and anodyne slogans, but a more honest and realistic approach.



The campaign will use a full range of own, paid and earned media and actions. It is important to retain a degree of flexibility in the precise tools used to respond to communication needs, but the Parliament will certainly be producing some video clips, have a strong social media and online presence, publish a press toolkit, organise events, coordinate audio-visual operations through networks such as CIRCUM and EBU, produce radio spots, promotional items as well as outdoor advertising. Media space will be purchased where cost efficient.

All the EP Information Offices are playing a central role in rolling out the campaign at a local level maximising outreach through their extensive networks. They are the first line of contact for national, regional and local authorities, citizens, stakeholders and the national media.

All the communication products will be made available through the Parliament’s recently launched Download Centre². The Parliament is making a particularly big effort in ensuring our communication partners can have access to all our materials. The upcoming elections are a matter concerning all institutions and bodies and therefore it’s the Parliament’s wish that as many organisations as possible take ownership and act as multipliers of the campaign.

The road so far and the road ahead

Since 1999, the Parliament has been carrying out institutional communication campaigns for the European elections. There has been a clear evolution and definition of the messages through them, from a simple reminder of the date of the elections, passing through the introduction of the notion of choice in 2004, a clear reference to policy choices in 2009 to this upcoming elections where we aim to highlight the political nature of the European Parliament and of the EU. It’s not only a choice in policies; it’s a political choice that belongs to EU citizens.

As stated by our Vice-presidents during the launch event, the European Parliament is “the citizens’ voice in the EU decision-making process” and therefore their participation in the upcoming European elections is the “way to legitimize and influence EU decision making”. As times are changing, so is the European Parliament. In the coming European Elections EU citizens will have the power to decide what happens or doesn’t happen in Europe. It’s the Parliament’s objective to ensure that come that moment, citizens have had access to all the information required to take an informed decision. ■

Make your voice heard!

Adam Nyman
Director,
Debating Europe



VOTE 2014

Citizens speak, politicians respond. It's a simple concept, and it's at the heart of what Debating Europe does. It has also proved to be a popular idea.

Since its launch in September 2011, we have received over 11,000 comments on the platform and more than 600 policymakers – from European and national parliamentarians to Prime Ministers – have responded.

With the rise of social media and the 24-hour news cycle, citizens now expect their politicians to react in real-time to their concerns, fears and frustrations. Debating Europe offers a space for this debate to take place, facilitating genuine back-and-forth discussion between citizens and politicians who represent them. Given the staggering array of challenges currently facing the continent, this kind of dialogue is sorely needed, and never more so than in the run-up to the European Parliament next year.

As the only EU institution that is democratically elected by citizens throughout the entirety of the 28-nation bloc, the European Parliament bears the greatest weight of accountability to the European electorate. Without a fuller understanding of its role and the issues it faces with regards the future of the EU, citizens will not show interest and continue to be wary of the so-called 'democratic deficit' which has afflicted popular opinion on the EP's activities throughout Europe.

In a 2008 Eurobarometer report, 60% of respondents said that if they didn't vote in the 2009 European elections, it would be because they did not sufficiently know the role of the European Parliament.

To help combat this lack of awareness, Debating Europe has launched Vote 2014, the first ever pan-European on-line e-Vote.

It is designed for voters not only to learn more about the European Parliament, but also to decide which parties and policies within the Parliament they support. From now till May 2014, citizens will have the chance to question MEPs (and prospective MEPs) on the issues facing Europe via a series of online debates, explore the policy-differences between the different groups and parties, and make their voice heard by casting their online vote on Debating Europe for the European political party they support.

A live chart of the European Parliament hemicycle will show the results in real-time acting as a high-profile barometer of voters' intentions ahead of the real elections. Each month the interim results will be presented directly to MEPs.

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Adam Nyman is the Director of Debating Europe, the online discussion platform launched in 2011, designed to engage European citizens and policymakers in an ongoing conversation on the vital issues shaping our future. He was previously the managing director of EUPOLITIX, The Parliament Magazine, and the WorldBriefing Group.

One month before the European Parliament elections, the e-Vote will be closed and the final results will be presented in Parliament and sent out to the European and national media.



This ambitious initiative is the first ever pan-European exercise in e-democracy of its kind, and will be the largest ever cross-border e-vote involving citizens from each of the 28 EU member-states.

Make your voice heard. Vote! ■



debatingeurope.eu/vote
facebook.com/debatingeurope
twitter.com/debatingeurope



A successful experience: Back to school Sharing views on Europe

Vincenzo Le Voci

The “Back to School” project was launched in 2007 by the German government to communicate Europe to the young generation in the 50th Anniversary of the treaties and to mark the start of the semester of German Presidency of the Council of the European Union.

This initiative therefore initially provided an opportunity to reinforce cooperation with the acting presidencies in the field of communication. But its very positive impact on the audiences triggered an overall agreement to carry out the project in all countries of the EU (a few years ago merged with the so-called “Europe Springdays”).

The purpose of the EU “Back to School” programme is to offer the chance to European civil servants to return to their own secondary school, sharing their personal experience with Europe. As a matter of fact, by volunteering to meet their own local communities the EU officials act as “EU Ambassadors” for one day, the “direct Europe’s face”.

The “ambiance” is very stimulating. On the one hand, the EU staff debates with students from their same geographical provenance on a wide variety of topics related to the Union and discusses on the European project from close up. On the other hand, it shares its feelings and views on its own life experience and work expectations within the EU.

The initiative is focusing on primary and secondary school students, but very often the audience of course include teachers, who are often excited to join discussions and encourage students to take part in the interactive sessions.

Depending on the arrangements made in concertation with government and local school authorities, the EU officials could be also joined by other communication specialists.

I have personally been involved in such an experience and am proud for the successful results of my two short conferences held before summer in my Italian home region of Calabria. I was so excited to share views and reply to so many direct questions on a wide range of common themes (what can you buy on line from the foreign market? why so many European institutions? why a number of countries haven't chosen to join the euro-zone? what's the difference between the European Council, the Council of the EU and the Council of Europe? what University studies would you recommend for those who are interested in trying a career as European official? and many others...)

Listening youngsters from your own hometown, children of your former schoolfriends, expressing themselves freely on their “vision of Europe” and on their feelings on being European, was so gratifying!!! I was so excited to hear them eager to know about the dynamics of successful exchange programs such as “Leonardo Da Vinci”, “Erasmus”, “Comenius” and traineeships options within the EU. We also briefly talked about the 2013 as “European Year of Citizens”: and its use as an ideal platform to feel personally committed in view of the European elections foreseen in spring 2014 - and I reminded those students, who were just graduating, that they will exercise their right to vote for the first time on that occasion.





Back to School

(TRANSLATION BACK TO SCHOOL)

A EUROPEAN UNION INITIATIVE
TO SHARE VIEWS ON EUROPE

SCHOOL + CITY
Presentation by NAME
DATE and TIME



www.consilium.europa.eu



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DATE and TIME



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Discussion also focussed on the effectiveness of interactive platforms for mobility such as “EURES” (the internet connection between potential employers and job seekers in Europe), and opportunities for employment in the European institutions (training for young graduates and EPSO competitions for future European officials), as well as on successful educational and cultural initiatives developed under the umbrella of the Italian Department for European policies of the network such as “Europe-Us” and “New Talents for Europe”.

It was nice to speak and listen, to launch a couple of open questions and reply to the audience in a language very different than “pure Eurocratic jargon”...in other words, to feel immersed in a very cool interactive scenario. I thought those young students will soon become the main interpreters of the future of Europe; they are taking the relay of a neverending fight in defense of democratic principles, solidarity, common growth and development. And I just did the best I could to convey some hints which I hope will help young people draw inspiration and motivation. ■



Plenary meeting Venice

Venice - 14/15 November 2013:
“New trends and challenges
in national and European public
communication”

At its next plenary meeting, which will be hosted in the “Serenissima” on 14/15 November 2013 in the premises of the “Presidio militare dell’Esercito italiano” in “Riva degli Schiavoni”, the Club will seize the opportunity to continue tackling important topics at the core of the national communication authorities such as:

- government communication: sharing know-how and best practice on organizational issues and coordination models (“capacity building”), inspiring strategic models to manage qualified staff and resources, in particular when to [re-]organising structures to cope with times of financial constraints; keeping the citizens well informed and interacting with them, stimulating their engagement in policy-making
- communicating Europe: seeking convergencies in communication strategies building; exploring new forms of true cooperation and partnership among the key players (governments and institutions); create synergies to contrast the growing lack of confidence of citizens in the EU, reshaping communication to help making the EU more effective and credible, in view of the upcoming European elections foreseen in spring 2014;
- developing joint concrete and objective monitoring plans and evaluation strategies.

The three main sessions will be organised as follows:

- Thursday 14 November morning: debate around public communication trends and behavioural changes : “A state of sharing: relevant trends for government communication”
- Thursday 14 November afternoon: “organising communication”: presentation of the UK government communication plan 2013/2014 + debate
- Friday 15 November morning: “Communicating Europe: engaging citizens in the European project”: the European elections 2014, citizens’ dialogue, the future of partnership

See next page for the detailed programme!



Draft agenda

Meeting languages: IT, EN, FR

Thursday 14 November

- 9.00 - 9.30 Guests' arrivals and registration
- 9.30 - 10.00 Opening statements
Welcome by the Italian hosting authorities (representatives from the Government PM Office and regional or local authorities)
STEFANO ROLANDO, President of the Club of Venice
- 10.00 - 12.45 Plenary session
PUBLIC COMMUNICATION TRENDS AND BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES: OPTIMIZING IMPACT WITH LIMITED FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES
- KEY-NOTE SPEAKER: ERIK DEN HOEDT** (Director of the Public Information and Communication Office, Dutch Ministry for General Affairs) - Focus on "A State of Sharing: Relevant Trends for Government Communication" (NL Government new publication)
- Member States' reactions
- best practices and prospects for future intergovernmental cooperation (poss. interventions by Greece, Hungary, Croatia and other MS)
- communication campaigns on selected priority policies : Italy ("*L'Europa nelle lingue del mondo*"), other MS
- External guests: MIKE HEPBURN (Guardian)
- 14.15 - 17.00 Plenary session
CHALLENGES FOR GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION: ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES, RESOURCES, STRATEGIES, PERSONNEL, TRAINING
- KEY-NOTE SPEAKER: ALEX AIKEN**, Executive Director of Government Communications, UK PM's Office and Cabinet Office: Focus on "The UK Government Communication Plan 2013/14"
- Debate (poss. interventions by D, FR, LT, LV, AT, PL, FIN and others on progress made in government communication strategies, with special attention to planning, branding and evaluation)

Friday 15 November

- 9.15 - 12.45 Plenary session
COMMUNICATING EUROPE: ENGAGING CITIZENS IN THE EUROPEAN PROJECT
- KEY-NOTE SPEAKER: VERENA RINGLER** (Stiftung Mercator): "Think Again: Europe and its citizens"
- JUANA LAHOUSSE-JUÁREZ** (EP DG COMM Director-General): European elections 2014: cooperation in the implementation of the EP communication strategy
- YLVA TIVÉUS**, Director, Commission DG COMM (Citizens): results of Citizen's Dialogues, "New Narrative for Europe"
- JANE MORRICE**, Vicepresident of the EESC: "Engaging with Civil Society in the Debate"
- Debate: the communication budget 2014 and future cooperation between Member States and EU-Institutions [with contributions from Belgium (partnership legacy) and Sweden (MPA effectiveness)]
- LAURENT THIEULE** (COR Director of Communication): EUROPCOM Conference 2013 ([S]electing Europe)-Brussels, 16/17 October 2013 main findings
- Other external guests: ROBERTO D'ALESSANDRO (Council of Europe), ADAM NYMAN ("Debating Europe")
- 12.45 - 13.00 Conclusive session
- Issues emerged and three topics on the horizon: evaluation of public communication, capacity building, public diplomacy&branding
- Club planning 2014-2015 (plenaries, joint seminars, thematic meetings and workshops)



The Club expresses its gratitude to its members from Greece, Cyprus, Croatia, France, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Montenegro, Italy, the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions for their contributions.

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