

convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe




Focus on

Decrypting and [re-]building EU communication: The quest for reliable key-players


- Being relevant: detecting trends for government communication
- Analysing audiences and their motivation
- Crisis communication
- Communication and social integration
- Southern-Eastern Europe: genesis of a new communication culture



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Les vertus cardinales du Club de Venise ...

Philippe Caroyez et Vincenzo Le Voci,
Secrétaires de la revue

La communication publique en Europe et sur l'Europe, l'amélioration constante de cette communication et de la profession de ceux qui en sont chargés sont sûrement les « 4 points cardinaux » qui orientent les préoccupations et travaux du Club de Venise.

Au fil du temps, en plus de 25 ans d'existence, le cap a varié... plus sur l'Europe qu'en Europe, davantage les (« nouveaux ») canaux de diffusion que le métier. Peu importe, le cap changera encore, mais l'horizon reste le même !

A cet égard, la dernière réunion plénière du Club, à Venise, les 14 et 15 novembre 2013 (les pieds dans l'eau), a été exemplaire et nous ramène à cette réalité (à cette nécessité) que tous ces points sont (doivent être) liés.

Le métier d'abord. Il s'exerce avec une double obligation de loyauté envers les institutions et envers les citoyens... ce qui ne va pas toujours sans mal, dans un environnement complexe, souvent hérité de la propagande et qui présente un déficit de participation effective, sans réel débat public ni interactivité. Dans ce contexte, les communicateurs publics ont besoin d'un cadre réglementaire (loi sur la communication publique, cadre déontologique...) et professionnel (statut professionnel, formation, recrutement spécifique, organisation de la profession...) qui garantisse et favorise leur rôle et leurs actions de lien critique entre les autorités et les citoyens.

Ces questions sont régulièrement abordées au sein du Club. Stefano Rolando, fondateur du Club, fait le constat qu'il y a en ce domaine peu d'uniformité et finalement peu d'évolution au fil du temps... le modèle politique (national) prenant souvent le pas sur le modèle professionnel de la communication publique. Il remarque à cet égard que le modèle le plus généralement accepté et prôné par les chercheurs et les professionnels et qui implique un statut, un cadre déontologique, l'évaluation des actions de communication, des pré et post-tests... est le moins présent dans l'organisation professionnelle étatique de la communication publique.

Un constat amer, mais que beaucoup partagent.

La communication ensuite et la recherche constante de son amélioration. Deux expériences nationales retiennent l'attention : le Royaume-Uni en pleine restructuration et réorganisation tournées vers la rationalisation des services, des actions et des moyens, avec « comme un goût de déjà vu » sous d'autres gouvernements, et les Pays-Bas qui viennent de mener une réflexion intéressante sur les tendances actuelles et futures de la communication publique.

De la première situation, relevons comme fait remarquable : l'obligation, introduite par une loi toute récente, d'évaluer les campagnes et actions de communication publique. C'est une position qui devrait susciter l'intérêt, mais aussi le débat sur l'orientation à donner à la norme évaluative : une perspective quasi budgétaire (le « retour sur investissement ») ou celle de l'utilité/efficacité sociale.

Au Pays-Bas, nos collègues – dans une démarche de recherche mais aussi participative – se sont penchés sur l'évolution de la communication publique, ses tendances actuelles et futures (1). Finalement, à contresens du « faire moderne » avec les (bientôt plus !) « nouveaux moyens de communication » et de la fuite en avant que constitue la tendance au « tout aux réseaux sociaux » (qui n'a pas épargné les institutions européennes), ce sont les fondements de la communication publique qui sont interrogés : participation, interaction, explication, transparence, responsabilité des autorités et des citoyens... pour que l'un et l'autre entrent en conversation.

Vient, enfin, la communication sur l'Europe.

Nous avons déjà, dans ces pages (2), déploré la décision – aussi soudaine qu'incompréhensible – prise par la Commission européenne de mettre fin (unilatéralement) aux partenariats de gestion pour la réalisation en commun d'actions de communication et ce dès le 31 décembre 2013.

Malgré les protestations quasi unanimes des Etats-membres (3), relayées au sein du Club, la décision est irréversible.

Comme certains l'ont souligné à Venise, il importe maintenant que la dynamique et les acquis de plus de 5 ans de partenariat ne soient pas perdus et que les services nationaux d'information et les représentations de la Commission européenne et du Parlement européen dans les Etats-membres prennent leurs responsabilités pour élaborer ensemble les modalités d'une concertation et d'une coopération suivie en vue de la mise en place de canaux et d'actions d'information conjoints ou coordonnés.

Des partenariats de gestion feront place aux partenariats stratégiques, plus ponctuels... A chacun de consentir les efforts nécessaires (y compris financiers, bien sûr) pour conserver la dynamique des plans de communication, dans une perspective pluriannuelle, et de leur élaboration et de leur suivi en concertation.

La responsabilité des institutions européennes, et singulièrement de la Commission européenne, n'en reste pas moins engagée, tout au contraire.

Il est nécessaire qu'un large débat soit initié par les Etats-membres et les institutions européennes sur la question, les moyens, les modalités et les finalités du nécessaire « Communiquer l'Europe en partenariat ».

(1) Nous y avons fait écho plus en détail dans Convergences #3 et nous y faisons encore écho dans les pages qui suivent.

(2) Convergences #3.

(3) Notamment au sein du Groupe de l'information du Conseil de l'U.E.

The cardinal virtues of the Club of Venice ...

Philippe Caroyez & Vincenzo Le Voci
secretaries of the review

Communicating in Europe and communicating on Europe, steadily improving this system of communication and continuing to create a better environment for communication professionals; without a shadow of a doubt these are the “4 cardinal points” that guide the Club of Venice’s endeavours to carry out its work and address its concerns. The course has tended to vary over the time, ever since the group was created over 25 years ago ... with the focus being more on Europe than in Europe, more on (“new”) distribution channels than the profession. It is not important. The course being steered will change once again but the horizon will stay the same! The Club’s latest plenary session, on 14 and 15 November 2013 in Venice (“water, water everywhere”), was exemplary under this heading, bringing us back to the fact that all these points are linked or should be.

Let us first of all consider the profession, which is pursued in the light of the twin-track duty of loyalty towards the institutions and towards citizens ... This is not always a painless process, unfolding as it does in the midst of a challenging environment, often a legacy of propaganda, where a participatory deficit has been identified, owing to the absence of any genuine public debate or any interactive dimension. Public communication people therefore need a regulatory (public communication legislation, ethical framework...) and professional (professional status, training, specific recruitment policy, structure of the profession...) framework to guarantee and promote their role and activities as the critical interface between the authorities and citizens. These issues are frequently discussed within the Club. Stefano Rolando, the founder of the Club, points to the lack of consistency in this area, and, in the final analysis, the lack of progress over time ... the (national) political model (national) often wins out against the professional public communication model. In this respect, he notes that the model most generally accepted and championed by researchers and professionals, involving a status, an ethical framework, an assessment of the communication initiatives, pre-testing and post-testing ... is the least common one in the professional structure of public communication at state level. This bitter conclusion is shared by a great many stakeholders.

Next comes the issue of communication and constantly seeking to make changes for the better. Two national experiences are noteworthy in this regard: the United Kingdom in the midst of its structural and organisational changes based on streamlining services, measures and means, a process that seems all too familiar in the light of what other governments have embarked upon, and the Netherlands and its recent intriguing debate on current and future trends in the field of public communication.

In the case of the United Kingdom we note the striking example of brand-new legislation introducing the requirement to make an assessment of public communication campaigns and initiatives. This approach should not only excite a great deal of interest but spark off a debate on what direction to

take with the outcomes standard: a quasi-fiscal perspective (a “return on investment”) or one focused on social relevance/effectiveness.

Over in the Netherlands, our colleagues have adopted both a research-oriented and participatory approach to considering developments in the field of public communication, its current and future trends **(1)**. Lastly, moving in the opposite direction of “being modern” with the (imminently even more) “new means of communication” and the leap forwards represented by the propensity towards the “all social networks” approach (which has not spared the European institutions), the very foundations of the public communication system are being called into question: participation, interaction, explanation, transparency, the responsibility of the authorities and citizens... so that both sides engage in a dialogue.

Then comes, communicating on Europe. We have already expressed our dismay in this review **(2)** about the European Commission’s sudden and incomprehensible decision for the management partnerships, forged in order to undertake joint communication activities, to be (unilaterally) discontinued on 31 December 2013.

There is no going back on this decision, in spite of the protests made by nearly all the Member States **(3)**, and relayed within the framework of the Club. As some parties were at pains to point out in Venice, the important thing is to ensure the continuation of the momentum initiated and the achievements made during the partnership’s more than five years of existence. It is equally important for the national information services and the representations of the European and the European Parliament in the Member States to shoulder their responsibilities by working together to develop ongoing consultation and cooperation procedures for the purpose of creating joint or coordinated information channels and initiatives.

Management partnerships will make way for strategic partnerships, that are more specific ... It is up to all sides to make the necessary efforts (obviously including financial efforts) to maintain the momentum of the communication initiatives, on a multiannual basis, and in terms of their preparation and follow-up as part of a consultation process.

This does not mean the responsibility of the European institutions and, in particular, the European Commission is diminished. Quite the opposite.

The Member States and the European institutions are urged to launch a large-scale debate on the questions, means, procedures and the ultimate aims of “Communicating Europe in Partnership”.

(1) This was examined in greater detail in Convergences #3 and will be given further consideration in the following pages.

(2) Convergences #3.

(3) In particular within the EU Council Working Party on Information.

Informality and Truth

Stefano Rolando,
Honorary President of the Club of Venice

The Club of Venice has reached its 27th year of the life and we feel proud of having debated for years on a delicate matter – the institutional communication – while the European process was experiencing its passionate and tense seasons. Throughout these years this platform has enabled hundreds of officials and practitioners acting in their official capacity, but in a totally open and frank informal framework – to discuss important issues:

- how to capitalize from a variety of communication content and contexts, from an initial scenario of 9 EU Member States to today's large family of 28 Member States;
- better understanding the evolution of the communication approach from a multi-faceted point of view: not only technical, but also political, regulatory and ethical;
- how to carry out an objective in-dept analysis of the real intentions and concrete perspectives for communication within the national authorities as well as the European institutions;
- how to evaluate the performance of a dual relationship of the key-players, namely the public communicators' synergies but also their conflictual areas with citizens and with the political powers.

The rule of the Club meetings is dual and simple: informality and truth. And it reveals at the same time the Club force and its enormous potential. This body is not convening to make decisions by virtue of “representation power and procedures”. This is not even the place to reflect more or less apparent constraints and set mid or long term deadlines. The Club main “raison d'être” is to understand each other, adopting – acting on our free personal capacity - an approach which is the metaphor of the quality of relationships between institutional and social systems. Doing so in the age of the internet and interactivity, we are also conscious of operating within a framework of experiences which bear the heritage of the 20th century – therefore of multiple and different communication formulas.

As a matter of fact, synthesizing the 20th century - one might say that there have been two completely different ways to elaborate on “the letter P” : developing the culture of propaganda or the culture of participation .

Today we teach students and young officials that, in order to understand the dual relationship of loyalty towards the institutions and to the citizens, there is a need to develop the so-called “critical training”. This includes an insight on the historical and political roots and reasons, but also on the conflict of interest which lies behind the communication processes, the relationship between power and media and the criteria of training of the ruling classes in the public sector.

Without falling into pure speculations on whether to tackle this matter from an ideological or sociological point of view, the key issue here is that we have been trying to prove for years that sharing experiences and evaluating them jointly are pre-condition to build a more critical and objective vision of

our work. And that in my view, there is no other way to go. This is the only reasonable approach.

The Club plenaries will thus continue to focus on organizational issues, which are the ones who do not raise much media attention abroad, but indeed are the ones on which depends the quality of the functional processes which, in their turn, depend on communication.

If we look around us, on the eve of the crucial deadline of the next European elections, Europe is increasingly revealing inequalities in the field of public communication. Some countries have adopted laws in this field and some haven't. Some have expanded and integrated their communications functions and others are adopting a sectorial approach. Some have set up a mandatory framework for impact assessment and some haven't. Some have set up communication centrally-oriented models and others have chosen a de-centralized model. There are those who develop a journalistic approach and those who opt for a relationship-oriented one.

I've been saying for years – as I did lastly at the 4th edition of the EuroPCom Conference held in Brussels in mid October - that Europe should make an attempt to draw up a statute of the professional profile of the public communicator which, despite obvious envisageable nuances, would aim at creating a perimeter of shared functions (which would consequently help sharing the educational processes) in the interest of our citizens. And citizens (I mean, as single citizens or associated within enterprises) do have their right - not only with regard to the currency or in the field of customs or health or food safety – but also in the field of communication and information provision, to be treated in the same way.

At the same time, this re-consideration of our role as public communicators must be accompanied by an honest internal analysis of whether we are really looking forward to a two-way approach in communication. If we neglect signals received from citizens, if we do not capitalize from clear indications about their expectations and their dissatisfaction, and even worst, if we only reinforce structures to be more technically performing without drawing attention to the substance, we fail.

There must be a clear change of approach and this can happen only if we analyse clearly, objectively and in partnership how the external audiences perceive our job. To this end, very interesting trends continue to emerge from the latest plenaries as well as from joint conferences and seminars organised by “twinned organisations” (SEECOM, the above-mentioned EuroPCom, EESC civsoc seminars, etc.) which were attended by a number of Club members (some of whom also acted as panellists and moderators).

As I mentioned at EuroPCom and in other frameworks, we need to draw inspiration as much as possible from wide audiences and detect the real feeling in today's society. Public voices from universities, observatories, single experts and the media) expressing today criticisms towards public communication are important as they add transparency to the professional debate. And when detecting and collecting their perceptions, their state of disappointment, their hopes and their will to formulate proposals and to participate more closely in the European debate, we should refrain at all costs from auto-referential approaches, avoid adopting any propaganda-style, pay attention to the social component in the information exchanged. In other words, stop addressing audiences in a propaganda or professorial style and be open, frank and interactive - leaving the door to concrete follow-up appointments.

Someone may not necessarily agree with my criticism and some of you will wish to react as he/she deems it opportune. But let me remind that the best response is not provided by the communicator concerned, but by the citizen whose opinion must be sought in a survey which must be objective and technically rigorous.

At our last plenary in Venice we heard from our distinguished Dutch and UK colleagues about two very important trends:

- the NL Government intends to operate a shift in the communication approach, with the declared aim to "help people make their own free choices within the parameters of the public good", starting from the honest consideration that the governmental authorities have lost their monopoly on public services (looking in particular at the revolution caused by the network society and the huge changes occurred with the Internet). The old-fashioned organisation of the information and its dissemination from one central source is definitely gone and is being increasingly replaced by the e-government and open government approach, interaction, two-way dialogue and integrated communication by means of both traditional streamlined (but better structured) and new media.
- the UK Government has made mandatory the evaluation of public information campaigns and therefore their performance, by analysing the economic and therefore also the social impact. If there was a minimum share of code applicable across Europe, our profession would make a huge leap in quality. As a matter of fact, this way organisational, budgetary and functional frameworks would be subject and associated with the whims or the selfishness of politics, but with service rules based on concrete evaluation exercises targeting the users.

The Club is there to help develop these topics together as openly as possible and encourage governmental and institutional communicators to invest energies in these crucial aspects, all of each of equal importance: relevance, innovation, share, training, planning, monitoring and evaluation.

To conclude, I would like to refer once again to the European perspective. I would like remind that, unless we find a way to encourage the debate among the professional public communicators which takes seriously into account the above issues, we cannot talk of a "civil Europe" - the one that pushes us to improve the global scenario through a joint effort rather than refraining from highlighting only the defects of single countries. I tried to tackle this criticism seriously in my recent new book on public communication published at the end of last year, dedicated to the triangle "communication-power-citizens", which explores thoroughly our organizational models and tries to ascertain if we are inheriting from the 20th century more propaganda or more participation.

The Club of Venice contribution to this discussion must continue to be neither assertive nor argumentative. It is sufficient to keep exchanging our concrete experiences for what they are, without refraining from sharing also details on their weak aspects, in order to render good service to the professional ethic values that should characterize everybody's work. The name we have chosen for the Club review - "Convergences" - could not be more appropriate and forward-looking.

Summer School

European public communication



Club of Venice
Pietrasanta (Tuscany-Italy)
Monday, 25 August - Saturday, 6 September 2014

Dear Friends and Colleagues,
You will recall the presentation of the “Summer school” project which we made in Venice on November 14. We are due to launch it in August 2014, and we are pleased to send you in .ppt version an outline of the two weeks. Although it is indicative and provisional, it does offer a precise idea of the topics to be covered.

We are sure that we do not have to stress again the importance of a shared plan to the intrinsic nature of the Club's mission.

The final programme will be shaped by the teachers whom you yourselves will propose.

- As first step, therefore, we ask each corporate member of the Club (EU, MS and institutions) to suggest at least one qualified teacher. These teachers should have roots in a well-known universities or training centres. We need their full contact details, the suggested subject of their classes, and if possible also their main areas of scientific interest. We need these by 15 March 2014.
 - The second step consists of selecting - for this first edition of the school - a number of professors able to shape the programme and final content. We need to be have their contact details by 31 March 2014.
 - As the third step, Club members will receive the programme and will be invited to provide names, qualifications and full contact details of possible participants. Ideally, these should be young people already who have already started their career, and who have relevant experience and managerial perspectives. We are trying to assemble a classroom of complementary “future leaders”). We hope to receive your nominations this by the end of April 2014, but we will endeavour to give as much notice as possible of pre-registration conditions.
 - If the number of participants reaches the “break-even” threshold of the project there won't be any need to promote it further. If not, we will need to find a way to boost the numbers.
 - Towards late June we will need to complete the programme and participants' selection, so that preparatory correspondence can be sent..
- We will welcome the participants on 25 August.
 - As we said, the project fees are intended to support teaching, logistics, administrative work and communication, and mentoring. Our aim is to launch the School at a low cost for participants (between 1,000 and 1,500 €), but this will depend on the number of pre-registrations and any contributions to the project which may come from institutions (Tuscany Region, the countries concerned and the EU institutions and bodies). Your initial reaction will be instrumental to the compilation of our first budget assumptions.
 - Thank you for providing us with your overall feedback overall, estimates and suggestions. And we thank you in advance for helping us by providing, at your earliest convenience, the names of possible faculty members.

Stefano Rolando
Mike Granatt
Vincenzo Le Voci



Club of Venice



Summer School

European public communication

Pietrasanta (Tuscany-Italy)

Monday, 25 Août - Samedi, 6 Septembre, 2014

1

Summer School

European public communication



9:00 to 12:00

3 hours (first part)

90' lesson - 90' discussion

12:00 to 16:00

4 hours free

16:00 to 19:00

3 hours (second part)

90' lesson - 90' discussion

2

Summer School

European public communication



second week

Monday

Morning

Institutional public communication
Evolution disciplinary and research trends

Afternoon

Political communication. Evolution of disciplinary and research trends

10

Summer School

European public communication



Tuesday

Morning

The relationship between public communication and corporate communication

Afternoon

Evolution of the visual identity in public communication

11

Summer School

European public communication



Wednesday

Morning

Branding and competitive public identity

Afternoon

The impact of large-scale public events on Branding

12

Summer School
European public communication



Thursday

Morning
Public Diplomacy. Present series international
Afternoon
Crisis communication. Present series international

13

Summer School
European public communication



Friday

Morning
Institutional communication and social communication.
Afternoon
The Catholic Church and its communication
in the era of Pope Francis

14

Summer School
European public communication



Saturday

Morning
Closing lecture
Collective reflections
Closing lunch

15

Summer School
European public communication



first week

Sunday evening
Dinner reception

3

Summer School
European public communication



Monday

Morning
Political-institutional framework of the new Europe
in the global context
Afternoon
European process and media representation

4

Summer School
European public communication



Tuesday

Morning

Trends of reform in the system of public administration in Europe

Afternoon

The space for the relational functions in administrative cultures

5

Summer School
European public communication



Wednesday

Morning

The relationship between politics and administration in the management of institutional communication processes

Afternoon

Evaluation systems of public communication in Europe

6

Summer School
European public communication



Thursday

Morning

EU institutions and their relations with the media

Afternoon

The EU institutions and relations with citizens, associations and enterprises

7

Summer School
European public communication



Friday

Morning

The scenario of innovation in communicative functions

Afternoon

Digital Agenda and public communication

8

Summer School
European public communication



Saturday

Morning

Tuscany; public communication laboratory

Saturday afternoon and Sunday

Free

9

“Unity is not what ever failed us yet”

Verena Ringler

Europe project manager Stiftung Mercator Germany

Photo : Simon Bierwald



The Future has arrived in most disciplines: We look around and we see that nearly everywhere, conventional wisdoms are debunked, and traditional variables are taken out of the equation.

If you talk to innovators in medicine – they think of “health” without the body in the equation: most of the cardiovascular system can soon be fully replaced artificially.

Strategists at Shell, the energy giant, will tell you that they think of the future of energy without oil in their equation, and strategists at Volkswagen, the carmaker, think of the future of mobility without private cars in theirs.

The story continues: German business leaders now think about the future of advertising minus TV: It is now understood that youtube has overtaken TV.

And even international relations and policy thinkers now put what seemed crucial to their profession into question – e.g. the sheer idea of power. Just consider three book titles of venerable experts in recent months: Moises Naim published “The End of Power”, Tim Jackson published “Prosperity without Growth”, and Carne Ross wrote “The Leaderless Revolution”.

All these players engage in these difficult exercises – of radically debunking the conventional wisdom of their trades and branches when thinking about the future—for three reasons:

- First, they aim to focus on the essence of their trade, or story, or mission.
- Second, they know that systemic challenges require systemic answers, and thus adaptations from linear to systemic response capacities.
- And third, they want to jump ahead of the agenda, rather than trail behind.

What are we as communicators invited to take out of our equation? I believe we are invited to think communication without an audience. Yesterday’s audiences are today’s co-authors of the future. What we see happening is that the paradigm of communication is in metamorphosis, evolving into and blending with the emerging paradigms of participation and, ultimately, co-creation. So we see a three step process: From Communication to participation to co-creation.

Co-creation is the buzzword of the day. The idea: that there is a table, that the table is round, that everyone can join, early on in the process. And that everyone has some lesson learned, some insight, that helps the common benefit. In united Europe, the idea of co-creation is that we harness our citizens’ potential when we think of the governing framework of tomorrow. The thought suggests that everyone is seen as an equal stakeholder of the future, that citizens are not seen as props of our

democracy but as the constituent elements of it.

We are invited to look at things with a fresh eye then:

- One man’s disruptor is another man’s innovator – just keep filmmaker Joel A. Barker’s insight in mind, who once said that “almost always, the paradigm shifter is someone outside the industry. The 21st century is the outsider’s century.”
- One man’s protester is another man’s policy advisor. Consider the similarity of aim, educational background, of ethic and moral motivation, and commitment to change that unites a modern street protester with a business or change consultant, or, an executive policy coach.
- One man’s unemployed neighbor is another man’s teacher on mastering risk and resilience. Think of the demanding and multiple adaptations in professional and family life that have to be undertaken by a person in response to the external shock of job loss.
- And finally, one profession’s insights might also serve another profession, or sector. Urban planners, organic farmers, start-up business leaders, digital natives, transnational cooperatives, neighborhood organizers and community workers already hold lessons for the creation of a good future in and for Europe.

To summarize, many citizens today might not be able to navigate the legal-political framework of Europe, which seems alright because this is what representative democracy intends. But most citizens today are amazing navigators of uncertainty. Their lives are about segments or episodes of careers, of education, of income, of employment. Their lives are about patchwork – patchwork families, patchwork sources of income. Many speak more than one language in the course of a day, carry two passports, have second or temporary homes, or claim so-called “hyphenated” identities (“German Turks”). Citizens as navigators of uncertainty. This means citizens are pretty skilled navigators of complexity.

What can you do with this insight?

I think you have the golden key in your hands. You have the power to convene. From the small roundtable to the multi-disciplinary convention – you have the power to convene; you are the best-placed bridge builders between what I sometimes call “the tribes of our times”: People from different backgrounds, with different worldviews, with different ideas on access, on information, on society, on mobility. People from the terrestrial and from the nomadic or transnational mindset. People who would not meet otherwise, as was the case some years ago when audience groups were more coherent or even conformist.

Verena Ringler has looked at the EU story from perspectives as different as Washington DC, as associate editor with Foreign Policy from 2002 to -06, and then again from Pristina-Kosovo, as press and public communications advisor with the European Council’s press and communications team and the cabinet around then-PR Javier Solana. She is now a Europe project manager with Stiftung Mercator in Germany.

Let's recall the arguably finest act of such convening power at play in recent history. It was in 1945, and the convener was Jean Monnet. He managed to convene the two antagonistic tribes of the most strategic profession back then: the French and the German coal- and steelmakers. He did not first ask whether he needed a mandate to do this, the formal membership in government or a political party, or, for that matter, an institutional, a central, or decentralized budget.

He did have the conviction and the activism to convene. He got the two countries' coal and steel barons into the same room and got them to speak about the same future. This was the real miracle, this is the cradle, the core of any narrative of united Europe. It's also the homework of any convinced European at any given time – to manage convening the antagonists, or estranged partners of a given era into a room. To get them to speak to each other, no, further – to get them to speak with each other, and about the same future.

So, a successful communicator would manage to get the two most polarized or entrenched parties in the room and encourage them to see what unites them, rather than divides them.

Who would these parties be today?

- Some say: They are key voices from creditor Europe and debtor Europe
- To others, the most polarized groups today are key voices from the financial industry and from political decision-making, or more generally from particular interest groups versus public interest groups.
- And to third ones, the two most estranged camps in Europe today are what we call "governance insiders" and "governance outsiders", people who know how to realize their rights and duties as citizens, and others who do not.

These kinds of conventions are what I'm also doing in my professional practice. In 2012 for instance, I developed and led an "Unconventional EU Summit" for Europe's future, with 25 carefully scouted governance insiders, and 25 carefully scouted innovators from realms outside of governance. Just some days ago in Berlin, we at Stiftung Mercator rolled out a new parliamentary dialogue format, which aims to offer a long-term European convening space for regional and national parliamentarians in North as well as South Europe.

There is a remarkable finding in these hands-on convening endeavors: It is the realization that unity in Europe has never failed us yet; only division has. There is a lot of work ahead of us though. In meetings I attended in the past two years alone, I heard three spontaneous associations with the European Union.

- Guests from the South-east say, they associate united Europe with "Schengen".
- Guests from the South say "Troika".
- And many guests, especially younger ones from what we can call central or Northern Europe say - "lobbies".

Schengen, Troika, Lobbies—these words imply closeness, an exclusivity, possibly good but possibly bad intentions by some that surely lead to bad effects for many.

This is not good: Not only do our most talented, most hopeful voices miss a table to convene at—it's worse: They miss a whole storyboard on united Europe! They are yet to be invited; activated; empowered. Everyone looks warily to the EP elections 2014, while we are yet to offer a platform for people who, between Rome, Helsinki, and Bucharest could meaningfully deposit their wish for a more united answer to the European crisis.

We are also yet to offer some kind of membership program—maybe not business angels but politics angels—where people from the very young age onwards learn how to enforce change in their community, in a group where they keep working on this process throughout their whole life.

So: when you mean Europe or the European Union, convene people to a conversation about the future. When you mean governance, convene them to a conversation about change management. If you aim at changing the game on Europe, if you aim at switching positions, from the defense to the offense for the European cause—then, convene. We need to renegotiate the foundations of our commonwealth in Europe, and we better start that soon.

This can start with series of agoras—multi-stakeholder meeting opportunities—on policy agendas such as climate change or employment opportunities. Such conventions mean you invite all those who might have an idea, a mandate or a stake on these topics—from the public and private sectors, from the local, regional, and larger levels.

Government today is not so much expected to provide citizens with the right answers; but to develop the right questions together. I am convinced that all of us here in the room want to ultimately stand in for liberalism over illiberalism in Europe, for pluralism over exclusion, for the sets of rights and of guarantees that we have achieved together, for the great things that we always managed to do as long as we were united.

Think of 1989 for instance. We were glued to the TV screens when people took the Berlin wall down. In this moment of macro-change in Europe, we saw solidarity communicated loud and clear, it went through rank and file. We understood that the unity of purpose can work literary miracles on the reality around us.

All of us here in the room, I am convinced, think of Europe's future today, and have one storyboard in mind. One storyboard by and for Europeans. Not two storyboards – one for winners, another one for losers. We all wish our most hopeful and most talented to associate "chances", to associate "hope", to associate "possibility" when asked about united Europe. One storyboard by and for Europeans.

The storyboard of Europe is about navigating global interdependence together, and it's about human cooperation – against all odds. Again, if we think back to all the big EU steps, policies, and treaty changes in the past years, we are repeatedly reminded of the fact that unity is not what ever failed us yet.

The Club plenary meeting in Venice (November 2013): pursue an integrated approach, adapt communication strategies to better respond to citizens' needs, be relevant!

Vincenzo Le Voci

Attendance:

- 25 Member States, 3 candidate countries, European Parliament, Council, Commission, ECB, CoR, EESC, Council of Europe, Regional Cooperation Council
- Mercator Foundation, Adenauer Foundation, Cap' Com, Debating Europe, The Guardian, University of Lugano

Meeting opened by the hosting authorities (Italian PM Office, Department for European Policies – Veneto Region, Venice Province and Municipality, and the Italian Army)

- Stefano Rolando's quotes : "The undisputable rule of the Club of Venice meetings is dual and simple: informality and truth. We do not convene to reflect more or less apparent constraints, uncertainties and diverging positions, but to understand each other, share our views and best practice, table inspiring communication and organisational models which could help build new synergies and more effective strategies. Hopefully we will go back with renewed determination with a view to help develop a culture of participation to fight against today's negative trends of a Europe which reveals inequalities and suffers from lack of citizens' confidence. We need to analyse how the external audiences perceive our job of communicators and their opinions must be sought throughout objective and technically rigorous surveys."
- Stefano Rolando's project for a Summer School on Public Communication to start in August 2014 (full details in this number of Convergences)

MS' models: organisational trends, surveys and planning

- Participants focused on the following issues :
 - **The behavioural changes being planned by government authorities to face the impact of new social and economic trends; how public communication evolves in terms of organisational structures and operational plans**
 - **Challenges for government communication: how to optimize plans and activities with limited financial and human resources; strategies, personnel, training, mutual co-operation (inter-ministerial and trans-national)**
- The debate was opened by Erik den Hoedt, Director of the Public Information and Communication Office in the Dutch Ministry for General Affairs, who outlined the results of the survey "A State of Sharing: Relevant Trends in Government Communication" carried out in the Netherlands.

This study revealed that the key to success for public communicators is the capacity of adapting to changes and deliver on matters which count. It detected 37 specific trends, regrouped in 7 thematic clusters: 1) be relevant to citizens; 2) change role, from "authority" to "network player"; 3) increase public disclosure, since openness and transparency generate trust; 4) communicate authentic stories, also told elsewhere, with public opinion as starting point of the debate; 5) commit to a new engagement, bearing in mind the power of emerging new media, proportionality and public initiatives; 6) facilitate the necessary "mind shift", where sharing and mutual inspiration are the guarantee for success; 7) change connections, exploit every medium in a continuous process and become a network player to challenge a complex society (without overlooking traditional media, which are still used by many citizens).

Participants agreed that today government officials are called fulfil an ever evolving task to respond to citizens' expectations – a new framework with “less government and more personal responsibility”, a new style of communication, but still with government participation, support and supervision. More public disclosure and engagement in an information society based on open government and transparency, since openness generates trust. There is the need to provide information which people can understand, fight mistrust by going out honestly, since public communicators are citizens working for other citizens. And beyond the necessary planning and strategic pre-conditions, the communication front line should follow an integrated approach: listening, monitoring, interacting, story telling.

- Alex Aiken, Executive Director for Government Communication in the UK PM's Office and Cabinet Office, outlined the reform of the UK Government communications and the government communication plan for 2013/2014, drawing attention to the need of professional leadership, high standards, an effective co-ordinating function and focus on cross-government campaigns. Those elements, including an optimised use of resources, are indispensable in a world experiencing media changing and witnessing the end of mass media and “traditional” press releases. The key strategic measures include the regrouping of hundreds of websites into one platform, the improvement of existing communication hubs, the integration of social media and digital channels within all communication functions, a comprehensive training plan and strong emphasis on professional capability.
- The Club welcomed the exchange of details on governmental analysis, plans, implementing models and social media statistics of national and trans-national relevance, including feedback from external bodies, on ongoing organisational changes in the communication strategies in different fields, in particular in the light of the social challenges caused by the global crisis.

In particular:

- Andreas Katsaniotis, Secretary-General for Information and Communication, outlined Greece's objectives to recover from the crisis, on the eve of the Hellenic semester of Presidency of the Council of the EU: a) convince the international audience about his country's commitment and efforts to pursue the necessary reforms, restore its credibility and re-build its image abroad; convince national (domestic) audience about the necessity of hard restructuring measures and reforms, mobilise citizens and partners and gain support. He highlighted the efforts to act through a multi-faceted strategy, using all communication instruments available to prove deep engagement and determination in all fronts, to contribute to recovery through a sustainable and inclusive growth. He also insisted that there is a need to deal with growing euro-scepticism and explain to the public the benefits of EU membership, that are taken for granted and therefore neglected.
- Anne Fenninger outlined the follow-up actions carried out by the Government Information Service (SIG) in the context of the modernisation of political communication. She focused on the new strategic approach in the organisation of the information campaigns, with special attention paid in 2014 to communication on energy renovation and setting up a set of related evaluation criteria, awareness-raising in view of local and European elections and optimisation of resource management, in line with the strategies announced by the SIG at the previous plenary meeting of the Club in Tallinn. Finally, she mentioned ongoing inter-ministerial co-ordination actions such as seminars of communication directors and heads of web services and studies to draw up a road map identifying new professional profiles and possible interchangeable communication tools.



- Anne Buhre-Kervefors informed the Club on new digital diplomacy activities being carried out in Sweden (the revamping of external and internal web, with embassies and ministries communicating on Twitter and Facebook, LinkedIn and new channels being massively used to storify, YouTube live, etc.)
- Claus Hörr shared statistics on social media usage by EU-wide politicians and their followers, showing different trends depending on the social network used as well as interaction level, posting frequency, etc.
- Dinka Zivalj, from the Regional Cooperation Council, highlighted the difficulties to perceive communication as a strategic activity in the South East Europe and how communicators in that geographic area are rarely involved in the strategic planning. This trend has a negative impact on public service, which is often inevitably detached from reality and suffers a gap with the citizens. This scenario is worsened by the digital divide between older and young generations. A new mind shift is badly needed, and training/education is the key to change. More attention should be paid to communicator's profession in the countries which joined the EU recently, bearing in mind that the communication shift must always be a two-way process (communicators versus public and vice versa).
- Likewise, Christian Spahr (Adenauer Foundation) gave an excursus of uncertainties in government communication in countries in "transition", highlighting that politicians from the area do not grasp the importance of professional news management, which adds difficulties to the already critical scenario of limited resources and lack of communication culture. South-East Europe democracy is new, journalism quite weak, and there isn't real support to working independently and critically. Only a small majority of politicians have spokespersons and political communication is perceived as something exclusive.
- Nicoletta Basili (Programma Integra, Italy) illustrated a new communication and awareness project ("Europa nelle lingue del mondo") implemented by the PM Office Department for European Policies in partnership with the European Commission and the European Parliament within the framework of the European Year of Citizens 2013. The initiative aims to explain to foreign naturalized Italian citizens how to benefit from the Union's rights and open up a public debate on the perception of the European dimension of citizenship and the EU's future (full details in an ad hoc contribution to this number of Convergences).
- Mike Hepburn (The Guardian) shared interesting elements on the new impulse given by the Guardian to opening internationally to the new media landscape. The newspaper's website has become the second mostly read in the world and is now undertaking to cooperate in setting up public service professional networks. Mike's contribution focused, among others, on "Society guardian", weekly public services and social affairs comprehensive overview of developments in, health, housing, the voluntary

sector, and regeneration. This comprises features, interviews, comment and analysis from the sector's best journalists and commentators, and showcases innovation and best practice in public services, and authoritative careers advice for public and voluntary sector professionals as well as attracting an engaged audience from the general public. The Guardian aims, among others, to create a forum for best practice across international governments and to encourage public service professionals around the world to share their ideas, concerns, latest innovations and techniques.

- Regina Pinna-Marfurt drew attention to the need of strategic comms planning and an integrated training strategies. She recalled the constant growth in educational offer for communication and, in this context, outlined the structure and organisation of the Executive Master in Science of Science in Communications Management in Lugano University.





Communicating Europe: Engaging citizens in the European project

- Discussion on the following topics :

- **The recent changes in the partnership approach between the European Commission and Member States and the impact on cooperation among institutions and between institutions and Member States**
- **Cooperation between EU and national authorities in raising citizens' awareness in view of the European election 2014 and encouraging them to go vote, with focus on the ongoing implementation of the European Parliament's information campaign**

- In her key-note "Think Again: Europe and its citizens", Verena Ringler (Stiftung Mercator) stressed the need to foster the three step process "from Communication to participation to Co-creation", accepting today's new reality where citizens expect concrete results and should never be seen as "protesters" but as policy advisors as their lives are directly affected by decision-makers. Verena insisted that, by moving from bubbles and small roundtables to the multi-disciplinary convention approach, communicators can bridge

gaps and contribute to restoring confidence in a common project. People from different backgrounds, with different worldviews, with different ideas on access, on information and on society can enrich the debate and work together to create inclusiveness, true cooperation and interdependence. And working for a better Europe is feasible only if there is a democratic dialogue about the future, about change management and changing or enhancing governance.

- The Club welcomed feedback on a variety of initiatives carried out by Member States, Institutions and civil society in view of the European elections in May 2014.
 - Comprehensive info on the implementation of the European Parliament's communication strategy (including work in partnership) was provided by Stephen Clark (EP DG Comm Director, Relations with Citizens), who focused on: the website being inaugurated on 1 Dec 2013, the wide range of partners and promulgators of the EP strategy (institutions, national bodies, international organisations, broadcasters, EBU, NGOs, grant beneficiaries, Europe Direct Info Centres, etc...), the EP news hub, a comprehensive cellar in the dedicated portal (www.europarl.eu/downloadcentre), the availability of infographics and one-minute explanatory film)

providing information on the five themes (jobs, Europe in the World, Money, Quality of Life and Economy) discussed in public events during Phase 2 (from October to March), the intensive social media activation, and Phase 3 (March-May) with 30" TV spots flagship campaign for free broadcast in the different Member States, a European Youth event in Strasbourg on 9-11 May, candidate debates, election night with live results and analysis.

- Ylva Tivéus, Director at the Commission DG Comm (Citizens) outlined the results of the EU-wide "Citizen's Dialogue" carried out from September 2012 to November 2013 to feel the citizens' pulse around three main themes (crisis; portfolio-related topics such as youth unemployment, free movement, gender equality, transparency and free media, PRISM, NSA and data protection; and the future of the EU). The initiative included ad hoc surveys through e-voting devices and "voting cards" disseminated by Commission's representations in the capitals. Follow-up dialogues are foreseen from November 2013 until March 2014, with a conclusive pan-European Citizen's Dialogue in Brussels on 27 March in presence of 3-4 participants from each hosting city and politicians.
- Jane Morrice, Vice-President of the European Economic and Social Committee, focused on "Engaging with Civil Society in the Debate". She announced the civil society media seminar being organised by the EESC's in Brussels two weeks after the Club plenary meeting and devoted to the mobilisation in view of the European elections. She also recalled the EESC's action plan for mobilisation adopted to enhance work in synergy with the institutions to better reach out to citizens. Today's main objective is to meet in particular the expectations of those who wish to be better informed on the EU (it being hardly possible to convince the apathetic audiences). She also underlined that the key issue is to get Europe in the heart of citizens and explain that the fundamental democratic values in our society should not be taken for granted.
- Tom de Smedt (Committee of the Regions, Directorate for Press, Communication and Events), recalled the successful 4th edition of the EuroPCom Conference 2013 centred on the theme "[S]electing Europe", which took place in Brussels on 16/17 October 2013. He praised the continued support provided by the partners and recalled two interesting issues: first, that the results of a recent study available on the CoR website, showing evidence that the European elections do not appear to be perceived as a communication priority by local authorities; second, in the recent edition of the Conference it was noticed that the debate shifted from "communication tools" to "communication strategies". The next EuroPCom appointment is on 15-16 October 2014.
- Adam Nyman provided an update on the platform "Debate Europe" which is engaging citizens in a political debate online and contains more than 600 interviews with politicians.

Debate Europe is on the 4th place in the ranking of websites of political parties and EU institutions. The project "Vote 2014" (pan-European vote online) was launched well before the European head-to-head debate to raise citizens' interest and foster their active engagement in the upcoming elections

- Alberto D'Alessandro (Council of Europe), underlined the presence of the CoE in sixteen different countries (liaison offices Europe-wide and in North Africa) and its important presence in Venice as a crossway of cultures, highlighted the need to be "physically" present to fill the gap with citizens. In this context, he recalled a number of events organised in cooperation with the European Parliament and the Commission to focus on citizens' rights, as well as the "Case dell'Europa" (an itinerary based on symbolic places identified to hold meetings with the public) and an awareness-raising campaign based on eight debates on "freedom of expression" and the "dark side of the internet" (focus on massive data collections).

Communicating Europe. : Engaging citizens in the European project

a lively debate took place on the communication budget 2014 and future cooperation between Member States and EU-Institutions. Philippe Caroyez (Belgium), Tamás Kiraly (Hungary), Claus Hörr (Austria) and Matjaz Kek (Slovenia) recalled the successful activities carried out since 2007 in the framework of Management Partnerships, focusing on the need to safeguard the good examples of cooperation left by the partnership legacy. MS' Club Members praised the effectiveness of the management partnership agreements (MPAs) and regretted the inexplicable decision by the European Commission to discontinue those instruments without prior consultation of its partners on the eve of the European elections, and against any negative indications from all evaluations carried out so far. In this context, the Club circulated copy of the letter sent on 23 October by the Visegrad Group (Ministers of Foreign and European Affairs in Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland) to Vice President Reding in which the national authorities expressed their deepest concern over the Commission's decision to discontinue the MPAs.

The national authorities are looking forward to appreciating the longstanding results of the ongoing horizontal evaluation carried out by the Commission since June 2013, which should be ideally brought to the table of the Council's Working Party on Information for a joint analysis. Igor Blahusjak (Czech Republic) provided feedback on his country's implementation of the Strategic Partnership (the alternative model suggested by the Commission for the years to come) and made a short comparison with the features of the Management Partnership (CZ authorities were hoping to sign for a MPA).

Main conclusions and one announcement

- Change management is the toughest issue: the Club will continue to act as a valuable platform to debate on new communication trends and governmental strategies to adapt to the new media landscape
- Have the Club more involved in helping “transition” countries exchange best practice and develop a government communication culture
- Continue to debate on possible models for an integrated approach to facilitate: 1) the adaptation of governmental communication strategies and information campaigns to the technological innovation; 2) the blend of traditional and new communication instruments; 3) engagement and participation of all audiences, enhancing ground for interactive and open spaces
- Develop a training culture for the professional growth of public (governmental and institutional) communicators; start consultations to prepare ground for the summer school for public communication (project launched by the Club President Stefano Rolando)
- Prepare for a first exchange of views at Riga’s plenary on the implementation of the EP’s communication strategy in the aftermath of the European elections (lessons learned-fresh feedback)

- Cooperation between Member States and the European Commission in the field of communication has been experiencing the most difficult period since the Commissioner Victorino launched the first proposal for enhancing collaboration for a common framework on information policy. Regardless to the transition period between the expiring and new mandate of the Commission and the European Parliament, the Club suggested to:
 - pursue discussions at both formal (Council WPI) and informal (Club) level, in order to explore possible new frameworks for cooperation;
 - while researching new partnership models, analyse ground for possible stipulation of new strategic partnerships between the Commission and those countries who had previously signed MPAs
 - safeguard the tripartite co-ordination models which were set up to enhance strategic cooperation on equal footing with the EP and the Commission at national level, according with the principles of the Joint Declaration “Communicating Europe in Partnership” of 22.10.2008
 - organize a debate on future perspectives for cooperation and to appreciate the results of the horizontal evaluation of management partnerships

The Greek member of the Club announced the intention of the future Greek presidency of the Council to organise, in cooperation with the Club of Venice, a seminar on crisis communication elements focusing on the communication on the financial recovery and its impact on the European elections debate and on the communication strategies to promote youth employment

What is the state of the European public communication strategy?

In spring 2004, after a record low in the turnout of voters (45.5%) at the 2004 European elections, Margot Wallström was appointed the first ever European Commissioner for Institutional Relations and Communication Strategy. Yet in spring 2009, the turnout was even worse (43%). No official “communication” portfolio was distributed in the “Barroso II Commission” but Viviane Reding was appointed for a third term as Vice-President responsible for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, that includes the communication portfolio. Will the turnout of voters improve in spring 2014? What has been done in the last 10 years to better communicate the ethos and work of the European Union?

1. Reduce the EU democratic deficit: a paradoxical success

After two setbacks in France and the Netherlands and lost referendums for the Treaty establishing a European Constitution, Margot Wallström seemed to agree that the mission of the EU Communication strategy was to reduce the “fracture” between citizens and the EU institutions.

The communication strategy therefore centered around demonstrating the exemplarity of the EU in terms of democratic rules and practices:

- On the one hand, participation of European citizens was the cornerstone of many EC actions, including the Plan D: Democracy, Dialogue and Debate in 2005, the “Debate Europe” online forum in 2008, the Access to Open Consultations for Citizens, the European Citizen Initiative and recently the Citizen Dialogues, which was at the heart of the European Year of Citizens in 2013.
- On the other hand, the transparency of EU institutions was at the heart of many EC actions, reinforcing the importance of public access to documents, the creation of a public register for lobbyists and the regulation of conflicts of interests. In 2012, the health Commissioner John Dalli had to resign following allegations made against him, in order to protect EU exemplarity.

A decade later, aside from European populists, few questions the EU democratic deficit. European politics, i.e. the “equilibrium” of power between EU-driven forces and national Member-States is a little more publicized for those who are interested.

But paradoxically, when the EU communication succeeded to blow off its strongest criticism, which claimed that it was not an exemplar polity, it failed to grasp the new needs of its audience, which are, put simply, to better explain the EU policies of the main European institutions.

With the financial and economic crisis, public interest became focused less on principles and more on actual decisions – and the EU fell short both in result-driven actions and comprehensive, accessible explanations.



Michaël Malherbe

is a communication consultant in an international Public Relations agency and a regular lecturer in the following master's courses: “European Studies” at the Sorbonne-Paris III and “European Affairs” of the Sorbonne-Paris IV. He occasionally also lectures for the ENA and Sciences-Po Lille. Since 2007, he has managed the blog “Décrypter la communication européenne”: lacommeuropeenne.fr



The change in how the EU was perceived ranged from a bad perception of a democratic deficit to a worse judgment of inefficiency. Somehow, when the EU was flawed by its democratic deficit, nobody was expecting any specific results from a work in progress project: the image was generally positive with few strong feelings. Now, that the EU is seen as more accountable for its activities, it fails to deliver; general feeling has deteriorated in the run-up to the 2014 European elections, engendering a fear not only of another drop in participation but of the development of a stronger populism concerning the EU.

2. Ensure the basics: an everlasting challenge

Within the last 10 years, EU communication has undergone vast modernization: multiannual programming, a common approach of interinstitutional priorities based on the interests of citizens, an improvement in evaluation techniques, the tackling of social media, the pooling of synergies and the development of the best practices...

Yet, the basics of EU communication, defined in Margot Wallström's first action plan in 2004, still present challenges:

- Listening: the direct influence of the citizens' voice in EU policy-making remains by and large wishful thinking, even after many experiments designed to incorporate citizens' opinions on the EU and at a time of massive online social interaction. The year 2014 has also seen the first symbolic cut in the budget, dedicated to the analysis of public opinion (Eurobarometer);
- Communicating in a clear language: the glass ceiling which limits only those who are skilled enough to understand what the EU says and writes is still a daily issue, which reduces the circle of potential multipliers in European news. This circle has been made dramatically smaller after the EC decision to end Presseurop, the esteemed online European press review.
- Using the local level: the emphasis on national, regional and local levels was supposed to end the EU's reputation as a scapegoat. The Partnership Strategy adopted in 2004 and reinforced in 2008 remains today the most symbolic engagement of EU institutions and Member-States working as a unified EU, even if its budget has been cut in 2014 without proper discussion and evaluation by the EC.

Overall, the trends of the EC communication strategy for 2014, which are visible in the DG COMM annual work programme, are worrying with an austerity budget in an election year, that might not meet expectations.

La Commission européenne arrive dans quelques mois au terme de son mandat, c'est le moment de tirer un bilan de l'action de Viviane Reding à la tête de la communication depuis 5 ans...

La délégitimation de la communication : l'erreur des choix inauguraux de ne pas nommer de portefeuille à la communication et de mélanger communication et citoyenneté

Lors de sa nomination, Viviane Reding s'est vue confier une Vice-présidence et la Justice, les droits fondamentaux et la citoyenneté tandis que la communication (et la responsabilité sur la Direction Générale Communication) n'était pas nommée dans son portefeuille.

L'absence de visibilité pour la communication correspondait à une conviction de Viviane Reding que « la communication n'est pas une politique, mais un outil ».

En outre, communication et citoyenneté se confondait chez Viviane Reding afin « en priorité de communiquer efficacement les politiques communautaires qui touchent directement le citoyen ».

Ces deux décisions inaugurales se sont révélées inadéquates :

- D'une part, faute de donner une stratégie, autrement dit une finalité politique à la communication de l'UE, celle-ci se voit dévalorisée et son budget qui n'apparaît plus que comme une série de coûts et non un investissement se verra sacrifié.
- D'autre part, faute de distinguer communication et citoyenneté, la clé de lecture de toute action de communication de l'UE s'est concentrée sur les citoyens européens, le public pourtant le moins facile pour l'UE à directement toucher.

Annexe :

Que reste-t-il du mandat de Viviane Reding à la tête de la communication de l'UE ?

La liquidation de l'héritage de Margot Wallström : de l'utopie d'une communication avec les citoyens à l'idéologie du dialogue citoyen et le sacrifice des partenariats de gestion

Le « moment Wallström » de la communication de la Commission européenne correspondait à une rupture avec une période d'expérimentation de projets délibératifs/participatifs de communication de l'UE directement avec les citoyens.

Quand bien même aucune généralisation de la communication de l'UE avec les citoyens n'était sérieusement envisageable – ce que l'on pourrait appeler « l'utopie » du plan D – Démocratie, Dialogue, Débat ; Viviane Reding a décrété que toute la communication de l'UE serait dorénavant destinée aux citoyens en installant une chape de plomb, une « idéologie », un discours propagandiste du « dialogue citoyen ».

Dans ce cadre, 2013 a été nommée Année européenne des citoyens et des « dialogues citoyens » ont été organisés à grands frais partout en Europe pour que la Commission européenne puisse dialoguer avec les citoyens européens.

Mais un tel dialogue ne s'improvise pas et le plus souvent, lorsque la Commission européenne invite au dialogue des citoyens européens lambda, ce sont en fait les auto-entrepreneurs de la cause européenne qui répondent présents et persuadent la Commission qu'elle mène un dialogue avec l'ensemble des citoyens alors qu'il s'agit d'une communication qui tourne en rond.

Par ailleurs, l'héritage de l'approche stratégique de communication en partenariat avec les Etats-membres est littéralement sabordé de manière unilatérale, en cours de contrat et sans justification au regard des évaluations indépendantes. Il s'agissait pourtant de la seule réalisation unanimement saluée.

Au total, faute de la courroie de transmission des messages que représentaient les Etats-membres avec les partenariats et surtout faute d'une communication qui tourne en rond en invoquant des dialogues citoyens, Bruxelles risque de s'isoler encore davantage.

La confusion entre information et communication

Au fil des appels d'offre publiés sous le mandat de Viviane Reding, pourtant ancienne journaliste, une confusion entre information et communication semble s'installer avec un appel d'offre pour faire de l'espace presse de la Commission européenne une copie des médias en ligne ou l'appel d'offre pour passer d'une revue de la presse européenne multilingue (cf. Presseurop) à une agence de presse de la Commission européenne en ligne sans parler de l'hybridation problématique de l'information sur Euronews.

Il semble que toute l'architecture intellectuelle qui sous-tend cette démarche repose sur une confusion dangereuse pour la réputation et la crédibilité de l'UE et des médias. La ligne de fracture entre information et communication est un principe que tout le monde respecte de l'ONU au POTUS et aux Etats-membres.

Si la Commission européenne n'a pas intégrée cette règle fondamentale soit c'est parce qu'elle ne dispose pas des compétences pour la comprendre et c'est l'échec de la professionnalisation de la DG COMM qui est en jeu, soit parce qu'elle ne veut pas la respecter et c'est encore plus grave d'imaginer que la summa divisio entre information et communication ne s'appliquerait aux affaires européennes car cela signifierait qu'il n'y aurait plus aucune valeur ni aucun intérêt à une quelconque information européenne ou communication européenne.

Au total, la communication européenne aura successivement été délégitimée, puis l'héritage dilapidé et enfin la confusion entre information et communication aura été entretenue. Faut-il parler d'un dépôt de bilan au terme du mandat de Viviane Reding à la tête de la communication de l'UE ?

Being relevant – trends for government communication

Erik den Hoedt
Director of the Dutch Public Information and Communication Office

Last May we had an excellent meeting in Tallinn, so well organized by Villu and his colleagues. You surely will remember the presentation by Mr Rainer Nölvak. He was the initiator of “Let’s do it”, a campaign, mobilizing Estonian citizens, to clean up the countryside in one day. It was very successful. Many countries followed. The most striking aspect of this campaign: there was no government involved. For us, communication experts from the national governments and the European institutions, the speech of Mr Nölvak was painful at moments. Especially when he looked us straight in the face and said: “You are obsolete. People from the past.” I think he was not even trying to provoke us. He probably thought he was just telling the truth.

I know he was wrong. But to a certain extent, he was right too. People are more capable than ever to organize themselves. If we consider that the foremost role of government - in a democracy - is to take care of the needs of citizens they can’t organize for themselves, then this is good news. It implies more freedom of choice and probably, also lower costs. But does this mean that the government as such and the ones who communicate on her behalf are obsolete? My answer is a firm ‘No’. On the contrary, I think government has the potential to be as meaningful as ever before and I think government communication could be the most important instrument of policymaking in near future. Communication is no longer about explaining or selling ideas and policies. It is in the heart of policymaking itself. It is therefore important that we are relevant. Not for our own sake. But for the sake of the people we serve.

But we can only be relevant as we realize that our role is changing and that we have to adapt to our ever changing societies.

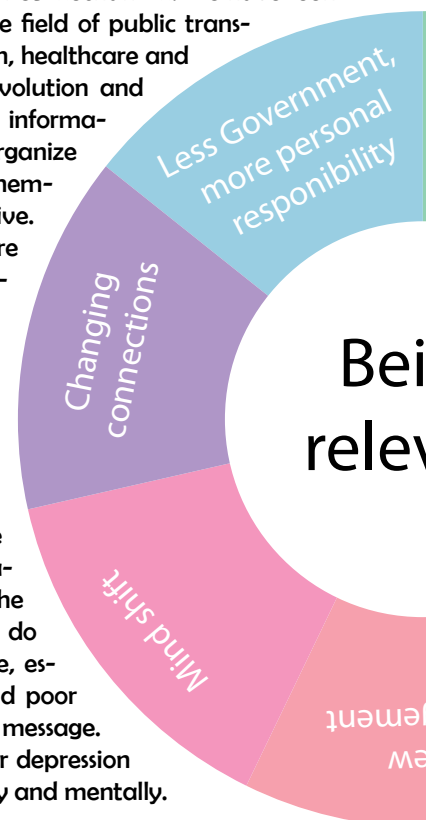
What are these changes? And how could or should we react to them? This year my office made a study on trends that we and other experts think to have direct implications for government communication. We distinguished 37 trends, which we grouped into seven clusters. It is not just about new developments 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 identified and underpinned the trends with the aid of desk research, expert interviews, research agencies and universities. These trends reflect the Dutch situation, but I am sure that almost all are illustrative for all our countries and Europe in general.

1. Less government, more personal responsibility

The question that arises from this trend is ‘who should and can do it?’ We see government taking a backseat. One reason for this is a positive one: optimization. Some services that were traditionally provided by the government are nowadays left better in the hands of market parties. The nature of the services is still collective but the production can benefit from introducing some kind of market mechanism. We have seen many of these changes in the field of public transportation, telecommunication, healthcare and education. Due to the IT revolution and what I call the liberation of information, people are capable to organize more and more services for themselves. I find this highly positive. But there is also another, more negative side: public spending cuts and bad policy. We don’t always hand over the tasks in a neat and organized way to our citizens. Most parts of Europe have faced a deep crises for many years, and we are only slowly recovering. What we, the government, in many occasions said is: “We don’t have the money anymore. You got to do it yourself.” For many people, especially older, low-skilled and poor people this is a very harsh message. They are more likely to suffer depression and are less healthy physically and mentally.

When we are taking more of a backseat there is a key role for expectation management and communication. When we are handing over tasks we should have a clear picture of how our citizens view more personal responsibility. What we learned from recent studies is that despite the general public support for more personal responsibility:

- Personal responsibility must not be imposed by the government. The government lacks credibility since it does not always discharge its own responsibilities.
- It depends on the policy domain. The government should still be responsible for education, care and safety. Personal responsibility is more appropriate when it comes to raising and caring for children, and to art and culture.
- Concrete appeals to citizens are likely to provoke resistance.



The principle is all very well but there is less willingness to come into action. They wonder: Can I do this? What good will it do me?

- Freedom is misleading as an argument for personal responsibility. Supervision will always be needed.
- The assumption that citizens can bear more personal responsibility because they are financially better off and more competent is false. First of all, households have no more disposable income than before and secondly, though educational levels are higher, some people are still illiterate, many have no basic qualifications, and there is also a group that cannot assume extra responsibilities because of disabilities and limitations.

This seems logical. But ask yourself the question: 'Do you take these notions into account when you communicate self-reliance and personal responsibility?'



2. From authority to network player - Where do we fit in?

Traditional institutes are no longer the voice of authority, largely because people are so much better informed. The possession of knowledge is no longer an unique selling point. How you share your knowledge with society – that's the new authority. The Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) learned some valuable lessons from the vaccination campaign against cervical cancer in 2007, which triggered a vigorous debate on whether to vaccinate young girls. Was it necessary? And didn't it entail too many unknown risks? The standpoint of concerned mothers as expressed in the (social) media was given just as much weight in public opinion as the standpoint of the 'authority', the RIVM. Now, says the institute, it is looking for a new balance between showing authority and listening to society. Whereas, in the past, the RIVM concentrated on issuing facts to professionals, it is now gearing its communication to an audience that seeks its opinion.

What we learn from this is that nowadays institutes have to earn authority. It is no longer given to them by their position in the system. I think this is a good thing. It is the result of on-going democratization and emancipation. But things are getting complicated because the system as such is changing.

Only a few decades ago society was held together by strong vertical connections. Most people felt themselves belonging to specific, recognizable groups. They felt represented by political parties, trade unions, churches etc. But these long-standing connections in society have been crumbling with the advent of individualization and the disintegration of politico-religious barriers. Nowadays people feel far less represented by traditional politics, civil society, interest groups or formal input.

A network society with more horizontal and temporary connections has emerged. They are more informal and often organized around single issues. This network society compiles its own problem agenda. An agenda that is discussed in social media and in the traditional mass media. Our – very old – parliamentary system is trying to catch up. But can it? 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). And we see the electorate is also shifting with each election. The present government in my country has only a majority in the lower house of the Parliament and is dependent of the support of three smaller opposition parties to get things done. This is a challenging situation.

The government and its agencies are still to adjust to this network society. Taxing, subsidizing and traditional legislative procedures don't do the job anymore. Classic communication strategies presuppose primacy of the government, a linear policy cycle and the dominance of large media. This is not how it works nowadays.

We need new styles of government, new styles of policy making and new styles of communication, with the emphasis on unifying rather than hierarchical leadership. The government will have to fit in more with initiatives of the people themselves. We need government participation. We have to find new ways of making, framing and communicating policy.

3. More public disclosure

What do you share? Society wants open government. More than ever before, citizens and stakeholders are demanding clarity from the government. People expect transparency about policy and accountability for motives, choices and outcomes. Take, for example, the debt crisis: people need information they can understand, more disclosure and an honest account of the strategy and the loans. Openness can help to win and retain trust.

Therefore, the government must pro-actively publish relevant information – not just in response to requests under the Freedom of Information Act and make other data available. But the government should not just publish information for the sake of it. Information should offer something extra to citizens and communities. Our data, data paid for by our citizens are worth more if we share them. These data can be used by market players to develop new services and products and can lead to new applications. And as a result stimulate economic activity. Transparency is thus not the only argument for open data.

Does this mean that we should disclose any information that is in the hands of the government? Of course not. There are issues of national security, land speculation and privacy. 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

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4. 'An authentic story, also told elsewhere

How do you come across? With the rise of the media-cracy, populism was pretty much on the cards. Politics look at public opinion as their guiding compass. Public opinion is often based more on sentiments than on facts and we see journalists focusing more on sentiment than content. As a result political parties nowadays seem to be guided more by public opinion and less by their own vision and theories. I think that our politicians should see public opinion as the starting point of debate instead of the outcome. Good politics is about changing public opinion instead of being taken hostage by it. We as government communicators could help them.

Because things are getting so complicated and sometimes confusing there is an unmistakable need for leadership: people like to line up behind individuals with a clear aim and vision, individuals with their own story.

I know that many of us in this room are sceptical about this call for leadership. We relate it to the populism I just mentioned. We tend to think that a simple message does not do justice to the complexity of issues underlying the problems. But I think that idea is false. A problem and a solution can be explained on various levels. At the top level it is always a simple story. It has to be. Because we cannot communicate complexity. But is very important that the



story is always true and authentic. This is important not only for politicians but also for us, government communicators. We must be reliable, credible and just.

The story need not be told through one specific channel. In fact, sometimes a different storyteller, such as an organization or agency that is closer to the public, can be more credible or more relevant than the government. When this happens, it is better if the government is the communication partner rather than the communicator. We did just that in our new organ donation campaign. How do you mobilize people into doing something that reminds them of their own mortality? That's the last thing they want to think about. Government campaigns about organ donation tend to come over as patronizing. People are more likely to register as organ donors if someone they know or respect draws their attention to it, such as a relative, a colleague or a celebrity. This should preferably happen in a social media environment where they are already active. This is why the use of role models and media partners was so crucial in the 'Yes or No' campaign. The campaign was highly successful.

Because so many stories are told by so many people, organizations and temporal groups there is a new role for the communication professional as a binding factor in the network society. The job is less about self-communication and more about helping others inside and outside the organization. The notion that all communication is the exclusive domain of the Communication Department now belongs in the past. Communication as a skill is for everyone; communication as a discipline is for professionals. The professionals are being challenged to develop their role more specifically in a strategic and advisory direction.

These first four clusters of trends all relate directly to the government itself. The next three clusters are more about general developments. But they too have implications for government policymaking and communication. I will address these briefly and then I will come to some kind of an overall conclusion.

5. 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. The internet makes it easy for people to come in contact.

As I mentioned a view minutes earlier I think this is a very good thing. Government should not interfere in things people can organize for themselves. So you should think that this trend is welcomed by us. But this seems not always the case. We want to keep control. And this is wrong I think. We should learn to welcome public initiatives, even if they do not fit neatly into your own perspective as a policymaker or communicator. Encourage people to take initiatives. Start with genuine government participation.

6. Mind shift

How do we view the world? Assets are no longer the be-all and end-all. Sharing is a strong and relatively new trend. Some say that property is 'out' among the younger generation. The new vision of consumption is about sharing, renting, lending and accessing. In the virtual world we see a shift from 'paying for ownership' to 'paying for access'. I must honestly say I am a bit sceptical about this trend. For me it is very hard to imagine a society in which a lot of material goods are shared between people. But is undoubtedly true that the Internet and social media stimulate sharing. It is so much easier to get in contact with each other and lend each other reciprocal services.

I think far more important for policy making and communication is the enormous increase in working flexibility. More and more people are working independent of place or time. Nine-to-five is a thing of the past. The dividing line between work and home is also fading. This poses new opportunities – such as combining tasks but also new problems – such as stress. We never feel free to do nothing at all. What we also see is that people no longer sit back and watch the world go by when they retire. And People are getting very old, which has a strong impact on the organization and costs of health-care.

7. Changing connections

How can we still reach each other? Mobile internet is hot. 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, but 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.

These are the trends. There is more on them in the report we produced. When we translated this report into English, the title sprang to our mind. We called it A State of sharing, because we saw so many trends which relate to sharing. Consumers sharing their experiences online, office workers sharing desks, governments sharing tasks, sharing expertise, sharing data, sharing communication. The reason is simple. Our society is so complex, you have to share to be successful.

What does this all mean for government policy making and government communication? From what I said over the past minutes you can imagine I think it means a lot! In fact many of the 37 trends we found are highly interesting and I know they all have implications for the way we work and communicate. But for me the most striking trends are the trends that relate to our role. Probably it is not the role itself that is changing. As like before the most important single function of government is to secure the rights and freedoms of our individual citizens.

It is more about how we play or perform our role. Whether we want it or not, we are forced to become a network player, to become ONE of the players. We have to play this role well. It is not an easy task. We cannot claim any more to be THE authority. Things are going so fast, are so interconnected and many times so unpredictable that we can't rely anymore on our old system, the system of linear policy cycles in which communication comes at the end. As I said: Taxing, subsidizing and traditional legislative procedures don't do the job anymore.

I think this is what Mr Rainer Nölvak meant. Not we are obsolete, people from the past. It is the way we used to do things that is getting outdated. Modern policy making is a continuous, incremental process in which there is an exchange of ideas with society at every stage and in which communication is the binding factor. But we need to communicate in a different way. Communication is not any more about sending out the message. I think conversation will be the central style of communication: listening, monitoring and interaction online and offline, with meaning emerging through contact and storytelling.

Communication is in the heart of policymaking. The role of communication is too big and too important to be left in the hands of communicators alone. We all must leave our towers, in Brussels, The Hague, Athens, Warsaw, Berlin, London, Paris etc. With 'we' I don't mean only 'us', government communicators, but all government workers. We all are communicators. In this modern network society we have to be. We all have the chance to become great communicators, because what we are serving is so beautiful, vulnerable and strong: our societies, our countries so closely integrated in Europe.

We must never forget that government is ALL about citizens. That government is about ALL citizens.

And we must never forget there are only citizens working in the government. At least, I have never met a non-citizen in my office. It may seem trivial, but we are in the first place citizens working for other citizens. In the frame of the government, a frame created by citizens. As long as we realize this and act accordingly, we can deal with every challenge now and in the near and long future and we will be relevant as long as we want ourselves to be relevant.

En vísperas de las elecciones Europeas: Perspectivas e incertidumbres

Aurelio Sahagún Pool
Member Emeritus

La Unión Europea lleva años funcionando con el piloto automático de un cuerpo funcional más competente de lo que se afirma en los medios, un cambiante grupo de Presidentes de Gobiernos nacionales, que se caracteriza por su falta de capacidad para dirigir políticamente la nave europea. Esta tendencia no resulta demasiado extraña, porque muchos tampoco resultaron o resultan muy hábiles en dirigir la política de sus propios países, y un Parlamento al que se envían representantes procedentes de unas listas que los Partidos de cada Estado componen con candidatos gastados ya en la política nacional, rivales incómodos, jóvenes inexpertos con más ambición que bagaje, y viejos experimentados en los pasillos de Bruselas o Estrasburgo, demasiado sabios y prudentes como para arriesgar su escaño con propuestas ambiciosas o innovadoras.

Así, Europa viene navegando una crisis fundamentalmente provocada por el desajuste entre la evolución económica-Euro, Mercado Unico, Libertad de Circulación y por ello Mercado de Trabajo en vías de consolidarse - y la parálisis política.

Francia y Holanda condenaron, con su "NO" a una Constitución Europea, el único paso políticamente decisivo que podría haberse dado para hacer que la Unión tuviese hoy una estructura política coherente con su magnitud demográfica y económica.

El efecto inmediato ha sido que la locomotora económica de Europa en el Eurogrupo - Alemania- está recuperado fuerza y velocidad, mientras que la mayoría de los vagones del tren europeo se desencuadernan, o directamente amenazan con descarrilar.

Y, precisamente, la solidez económica de Alemania y la inevitable concentración de poder que conlleva, está deformando ante las Opiniones Públicas del resto de los países europeos la imagen de Europa.

Muchos se preguntan si la Unión no es sino el principio de un Imperio Alemán, esta vez construido pacíficamente, constelado de satélites, si el Euro no es sino el Marco disfrazado, si el Banco Central Europeo no es sino el remedo multinacional del Deutsches Bank. Y multitud de grupos populistas, escasamente democráticos están haciendo su Agosto con la crisis económica y el fantasma del "inevitable" predominio alemán.

Resurgen chauvinismos, nacionalismos de campanario y sueños neomedievales: Escocia, Cataluña, Padania, Córcega, miran a su alrededor y ven que la Unión está llena de pequeños países- Chequia, Eslovaquia, Eslovenia Croacia, Lituania

Letonia, Estonia, y algunos escoceses, catalanes, lombardos, y quizá, más discretamente, alsacianos, bretones, provenzales, savoyardos, se preguntan por qué van ellos a tener que pasar por la pertenencia a Estados más grandes, para formar parte de una Europa a la que muchos pertenecieron, desde el Imperio Romano-Germánico.

El que ahora sea más Germánico que Romano, no es sino el producto de una larga Historia, en la que los europeos dimos la espalda al Mediterráneo. La crisis de los viejos Estados Nacionales - España, Francia, Gran Bretaña - obedece, en líneas generales a la velocidad con que se están produciendo los cambios en un mundo globalizado. Los viejos Partidos Políticos y los viejos Sindicatos se han ido convirtiendo en aparatos de fabricar políticos mediocres (ningún aparato produce líderes) y las promesas incumplidas, el populismo desenmascarado y oleadas de corrupción que aquejan a Italia, a España, a Grecia, a Bélgica, a la misma Francia, ayudan no poco a que los ciudadanos desconfíen de sus instituciones.

Por otro lado, desaparecida la Unión Soviética, el liberalismo de la escuela de Chicago se ha convertido en hegemónico. Ya no hay enemigo, y por tanto ya no hay que gastar dinero en satisfacer a las masas con Estados de Bienestar que resultan costosos, y aumentan la Deuda pública, porque los grandes beneficiarios del sistema entran en flujos financieros que mueven sus fondos a la velocidad de la luz y no hay capacidad de control financiero nacional que pueda seguirlos ni obligarlos a pagar impuestos. Para eso - y pese a tantas afirmaciones de principio en contra de ellos- los paraísos fiscales no solo subsisten sino que proliferan.

De modo que estamos en una muy seria encrucijada: Europa puede irse diluyendo, ganando en irrelevancia -una irrelevancia que ya está sufriendo por falta de liderazgos- y entonces ni Alemania podrá mantener su sociedad cohesionada (sufrirá también los efectos del empobrecimiento de los más en beneficio de los menos, y la consecuente crisis) ni el resto de los países de la Unión conseguirán mantenerse por mucho tiempo alejados de la tentación de competir los unos con los otros, en perjuicio de todos. Las Naciones en Europa, incluso las mayores, van camino de la irrelevancia en el mundo si no se consigue una fuerte Federación Europea de carácter supranacional. La alternativa será, a no muy



largo plazo, un neofeudalismo que romperá Europa en pedazos, gobernados por populistas, neofascistas, caciques y empresarios o financieros, con todos los riesgos, allá en un horizonte quizá no tan lejano, de nuevas confrontaciones localizadas, de las que ya tenemos harta y muy dolorosa experiencia.

Por eso las elecciones europeas, que se acercan a velocidad de vértigo, son este año decisivas. Hay que desear, trabajar y si se puede, conseguir que el Parlamento Europeo que salga de ellas sea realmente representativo del clamor de cambios profundos que exigen todos los ciudadanos de Europa. Y es preciso limitar en lo que se pueda, que el efecto nefasto de la crisis, el crecimiento de populismos más o menos neofascistas, chauvinistas y antidemocráticos consiga introducir en el Agora de la ciudadanía europea más representantes de los que lógicamente sería razonable. Si este grupo creciese significativamente, la labor constructiva del Parlamento se verá muy seriamente dañada, y sus efectos los sufriremos todos.

Y no me cabe la menor duda de que en términos paneuropeos la mayoría democrática y preeuropeas son muy grandes. Incluso a contrapelo de ciertas prácticas de Gobiernos nacionales, siempre deseosos de echar a la Unión las culpas de sus propios errores o de sus incompetencias, el sentimiento ciudadano de pertenecer a una Europa Democrática y Progresista se ha mantenido firme e incluso ha crecido. El mayor problema está en que muchísimos de esos europeos no acuden a las urnas en estas elecciones.

Las causas son claras: Los Estados, sus Partidos, sus Medios de comunicación, sus Instituciones Públicas, prefieren mirarse el ombligo y reservar fuerzas para las peleas electorales en el territorio nacional. Esta vez, más que nunca, se equivocan.

La misma existencia, y cuando menos la paz social, de esos Estados, está colgada del desarrollo rápido y firme de una Unión Política que sólo puede promoverse, en su inicio, desde el Parlamento Europeo.

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Por otra parte, las Instituciones Europeas carecen de conciencia del yo, como diría un psiquiatra dedicado a Instituciones, y ni la Comisión, ni mucho menos el Consejo, dejan de ser los sirvientes ciegos de esos Minicongresos de Viena que se reúnen al menos dos veces al año, sin que salga de ellos la decisiva resolución de ir a una Unión Política como es preciso si queremos sobrevivir en un mundo globalizado con nuestros derechos, nuestras garantías y nuestra calidad de servicios públicos.

Más vale, pues, que quienes lideran Europa se trasmuten en líderes, aunque no lo sean o tengan miedo de intentarlo. Es el momento de grandes decisiones, y la primera es provocar por todos los medios una asistencia masiva a las urnas en estas Elecciones Europeas. Puede hacerse. Debe hacerse. Hay que hacerlo.

On the eve of the European elections: Perspectives and uncertainties

The European Union has spent years operating on autopilot by means of a corpus of officials much more competent than the way the media have depicted them, a changing group of presidents of national governments which is characterized by its inability to politically steer the European ship. This trend is not too strange, because many haven't even been or aren't still very good at directing the policies of their own countries. And likewise, many were unable to lead a Parliament which ended up being composed by representatives from lists composed in each country by candidates already exploited within the national politics, uncomfortable rivals, inexperienced young men with more ambitions than background, and experienced old men who walk around the corridors of Brussels or Strasbourg, too wise and prudent to have their seat put at risk by ambitious and innovative proposals.

So, Europe is navigating **a profound crisis, mainly caused by the mismatch within the evolution of the economic scenario** (Euro, the Single Market, Freedom of Movement and through it, the Labour Market in the process of consolidation - and political paralysis).

Through their "NO" to a European Constitution, France and the Netherlands condemned the only politically decisive step that could have happened to endow today the Union with now had a coherent political structure with its demographic and economic magnitude.

The immediate effect has been that Germany (the economic locomotive of Europe in the Eurogroup) is recovering strength and speed, while most wagons of the European train are getting disconnected or directly threaten to derail.

Indeed, the economic strength of Germany and the inevitable concentration of power which it entails, is deforming the image of Europe before the public opinion in the other European countries. Many wonder whether the Union is but the beginning of a German Empire, this time built subtly "peacefully", studded with satellites; whether the Euro is only a disguised Deutsch Mark, or the European Central Bank is just the multinational semblance of the Deutsches Bank. And many populist groups scarcely democratic are building up their "August" by exploiting the economic crisis and the spectre of the "inevitable" German dominance.

Chauvinism, parochial nationalism and neo-medieval sounds and nuances are resurging: Scotland, Catalonia, Padania, Corsica, are looking around the neighbourhood and seeing that the Union is full of small countries: the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Croatia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia... And some Scots, Catalans, Lombards and perhaps, more discreetly, Alsatians, Bretons, Provençals and Savoyards, are wondering why they should belong first to bigger countries before being welcome to form part of that Europe to which many have already belonged since the Age of the Roman Empire.

What today is more Germanic than Roman is just the result of a long history in which Europeans turned away from the Mediterranean. The crisis of the old nation states - Spain, France, Great Britain - is generally obeying broadly to the speed of changes which are occurring in a globalized world. The old political parties and the old unions have increasingly become devices generating mediocre politicians (there is no device that would be able to "produce" leaders) and the broken promises, the unmasked populism and the waves of corruption afflicting Italy, Spain, Greece, Belgium, up to France itself, are very much contributing to citizens' distrust towards their institutions.

Moreover, after the disappearance of the Soviet Union, the liberalism of the Chicago School has become hegemonic. There is no more enemy, hence no longer need to waste money to satisfy the masses with costly welfare states which inflate the public debt. As a matter of fact, the big beneficiaries of the system fall into financial flows that move their funds at speed light, with no way to exercise national financial control to watch them or force them to pay taxes. Because of that, and despite many statements of principle against them, tax havens not only subsist but also thrive.

So we are at a very serious crossroads: Europe can go diluting, gaining irrelevance - an irrelevance that is already suffering from lack of leadership, and then neither Germany can maintain its cohesive society (as it will suffer from the effects of depletion of the majority of citizens to the benefit of the few, and the eventual crisis) nor the other EU countries will manage to stay long time away from the temptation to compete against each

Aurelio Sahagún Pool is one of the founding fathers of the Club of Venice. Communications Advisor, former Communications Director for the Spanish Prime Minister in Moncloa, he was the creator of the Venice Club logo (a detail of the main facade of St. Marco, symbol of a city cross-way of peoples and cultures, with a yellow lion on a blue background with sparkling stars). Aurelio lives in Budapest since 2010 and continues to be one of the most enthusiastic sources of inspiration for the Club.

other, to the detriment of all. European nations, including the largest, will pursue their path through irrelevance in the world if they do not attain a strong supranational European Federation. The alternative, at not very long term, will be a neo-feudalism that will break Europe apart, ruled by populists, neo-fascists, chiefs and entrepreneurs or financial masters: this scenario would entail all the risks, towards and beyond a not so distant horizon of new local confrontations of which we already had enough and have very painful experiences.

So **this year the European elections**, which are approaching at dizzying speed, **are decisive. We must hope, work and, hopefully, manage to enable the European Parliament to come out of them as truly representative as possible of the strong desire of profound changes rising from all citizens of Europe.** And it is necessary to prevent as much as possible the disastrous effects of the crisis, with growth of neo-fascist, chauvinistic and anti-democratic populism from introducing in the “Agora of European citizenship” more representatives than it would logically be reasonable. If this groups grew significantly, the constructive work of the Parliament would be seriously compromised and we would suffer all the highest imaginable consequences.

I have no doubt that, in pan-European terms, pro-European and democratic majorities are far predominant. Moreover, against certain practices of national governments always eager to blame the Union for their own mistakes or incompetence, the citizens' feeling of belonging to a democratic and progressive Europe has remained strong and in some cases has even grown. The biggest problem is that many of these supportive Europeans will not go to vote in these elections.

The reasons are clear: States, their parties, their mass media and their public institutions prefer navel gazing and save energies for their fight during national elections. This time, more than ever, they are terribly wrong. The very existence, or social peace at least, of those countries is [at stake][suspended] as it depends on the fast and steady development of a political union that can be ignited only by the European Parliament.

Moreover, as a psychiatrist specialised in treating institutions would say, the European institutions lack self-consciousness. Neither the Commission nor much less the Council stop acting as blind servants to those “Vienna mini-congresses” convened at least twice a year without producing any single decisive resolution towards a political union (which, on the contrary, would be necessary to survive in a globalized world with our rights, our guarantees and our quality public services.

This being said, it would be better for those who lead Europe to transmute into leaders, although they are not or are afraid to try. It's time for big decisions, and the first **is to sustain by all means a massive turnout in the upcoming European elections.** It can be done. It has to be done. We must do it.

To Succeed in Strategic Communications, Analyze Your Audiences and Their Motivations

John S. Verrico

Responsable de la communication Ministère des Affaires intérieures USA

Directeur de l'association nationale des communicateurs gouvernementaux

If you want to motivate people to do anything, take an action, or behave in a certain way, you need to understand their motivations. Your communications must be strategic to address those motivations or your message will never get through.

Before you set out on a communications campaign, analyze your target audiences. Ask the question: What would motivate them to take the desired action?

30 This is not always easy to answer. As a matter of fact, understanding motivation has been the eternally elusive golden fleece of corporate executives, advertisers, political leaders, front-line supervisors, and parents of teenagers. How do you motivate people to work, buy, vote, or clean up their room? If you try to generalize, you are doomed to fail.

First, you must understand the three principles of motivation:

1. You cannot force people to be motivated >> motivation comes from within.
2. All people are motivated >> we all have reasons for what we do (or don't do).
3. People do things for their own reasons >> not yours.

It may seem as if there isn't much hope for success, but knowing these facts from the start can steer you in the right direction when analyzing your audience and trying to figure out how to get them to do the things you want them to do. Here are some tips for developing your strategy.

Put yourself in their shoes

If you were your audience, why would you want to listen to you? Why would you be interested in reading what you put out? Why would you be motivated to take the action you ask? It's the "What's in it For Me?" factor from the perspective of the audience. This analysis isn't always easy. You must:

- Separate yourself from your message, product, company, organization, and even your own social standing.
- Forget your goals and whatever benefits that you will ultimately reap if your message has the effect you are hoping for.
- Ask others. Ask your mother. Better yet, ask people from your target audience.

Make it their choice

You cannot motivate someone else to do something they don't want to do. But what you can do is create an environment that encourages ownership of the idea – which in fact will allow people to motivate themselves.

- Create choice wherever possible so people feel they have more control over the decision.
- Make it personal whenever possible.
- Respect people – nothing motivates a person more than when they feel respected.

Ask why five times

"Why" is the most powerful question you can ask. Asking why leads to understanding the root cause of an issue. In problem analysis, many industries recommend the practice of asking why five times. Toyota uses this method to analyze mechanical failures or manufacturing issues. High-tech companies use it to understand how a virus infects a computer. Each why leads you closer to the cause of the problem. Here's an example:

Why did you stop singing?

Because I keep coughing.

Why do you keep coughing?

Because I have an irritation in my throat.

Why is your throat irritated?

I inhaled some smoke.

Why did you inhale smoke?

Because the room was full of smoke.

Why was there so much smoke?

Because the theater is on fire.

Each why reveals more detail about the real issue. So now we know if we want the performer to continue singing, we need to put out the fire in the theater first.



The premise of an old Chinese proverb (frequently attributed to Confucius although its actual origin is unknown) will help to illustrate this point:

“Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”

While this proverb is very profound, there is still a missing piece of critical information. Explaining who, what, when, and where is merely informing someone. Telling our fisherman who, what, when, and where about catching fish provides him information that he may or may not know how to act upon.

Including an explanation of how is considered training. Teaching him how to bait the hook, cast, and set the hook provides training. So now our fisherman knows what to do and how to do it for himself. But this still does not mean that he will be fed for a lifetime.

The critical missing element is why. Without understanding why he should fish, there is no motivation for him to put his new skills to work. Teach him, however, that fish is food and that he would starve unless he catches his own fish to eat. Now our fisherman has all the information he needs, he can understand it, relate to it, and make his own decisions about how to use it.

This is true education. The best teachers provide all the information – especially the why – so that the student can understand it and make his or her own choice about how to apply it. Top organizational leaders do the same thing. They openly provide all the information so that followers can make their own choices and take personal ownership of the mission. This is a critical difference between managers and leaders. In her books and training seminars, leadership coach Shiela Murray Bethel notes this difference: “Management is the how-to; leadership is the why.”

Whether your audiences are internal or external, if you hope to understand them and influence their decision to act – whether you want them to work, buy, vote, or clean up their room – is to ask and answer the critical question why.

Here’s another example:

Why do you work so much?
 Because I need money
 Why do you need so much money?
 Alimony is expensive.
 Why do you have so much alimony?
 Because I have 3 ex-wives.
 Why do you have 3 ex-wives?
 Because they couldn’t get along with me.
 Why couldn’t you get along?
 Because they didn’t understand how much I had to work!

Although there is no set rule for five being the magic number, it is usually considered the minimum in identifying the cause of a problem or the root of motivation. There can easily be more to drill down deeper into the situation. Obviously, with our workaholic example, there’s a more deep-rooted problem.

Every communications strategy should focus heavily on the why. But why is not only the most powerful question to ask, it is also the most powerful answer. Knowing who, what, when, where, and even how, are all pieces of information that help to illustrate or categorize a thing, event, function, or request, but people will not take action until they know why they should.

John Verrico is the President-Elect for the National Association of Government Communicators in the United States and has more than 32 years of experience as a public affairs professional in federal and state government agencies, working extensively in media, community and employee relations. A retired U.S. Navy Reserve Master Chief Journalist, John served in various public affairs posts with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s Science & Technology Directorate, Naval Facilities Engineering Command, Maryland Department of Environment, the Governor of Maryland, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Navy. John is a professional trainer on communications and leadership. He was also a former freelance journalist and a communications and marketing consultant for small businesses.

Prior to being elected as NAGC’s next president, John previously served as the association’s Director of Professional Development and the Director of Communications. He also serves on the leadership boards for the Federal Communicators Network and the U.S. Navy Public Affairs Alumni Association, and is an honorary member of the South Eastern European Communicators forum (SECOM).



John earned his Master of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from Norwich University and a Bachelor of Science in communications from the University of the State of New York. He has received many awards, including the Navy’s Rear Admiral Thompson Award for Excellence in Public Affairs, Public Relations Society of America’s Silver Dome Award for community relations, and was named one of the Top 5 Event Managers of 1998 by Exhibitor Magazine.

Characteristics, trends and changes of public sector communication in South East Europe

Dinka Živalj
Regional Cooperation Council

Heritage factor

Up until 20ish years ago, most of South East Europe and the entire Western Balkans were communist or socialist. This heritage means that generations of today's working age people have been fully educated in communism or socialism. A characteristic of that system was withholding information from people, rather than sharing it. The information was power, and it belonged to a selected few.

Most public sector managers are today in this age group. They usually have no public relations education and do not view communication as a profession. Rather, they believe that it is something anybody can do. Advice from a communication professional is rarely sought.

On a declarative level, there is an understanding of the importance of communication, but in practice, there prevails a lack of understanding what it entails. Communication is not perceived as a strategic activity, but rather as a technical affair, and communication experts are rarely part of strategic planning.

A notion of 'visibility' has become a very popular in discourse, but a link to connect it in real terms is often missing. There is a constant demand for increasing the visibility. At the same time, communication staff and resources are being cut even when overall programmes and activities are being increased. This discrepancy makes the work of a communication professional proportionally more difficult, at the same time decreasing its impact.

Every communication professional knows that without effective internal communication there can be no successful institution or company. Yet, the importance of internal communication is often underestimated in practice. More meetings and reports are usually introduced as the only solution – ultimately leading to excessive bureaucratization of work, with public officials becoming their own purpose, less and less serving the public.

Clearly, a solution would be investing more resources in communication training and life-long learning but, as a consequence of the socialist heritage, recognition that one might need more training is frequently viewed as a sign of weakness, and consequently better avoided.

The public/media sphere

In today's world of fast changing technology, accessible data and computer-raised youngsters, people have started demanding change and more participation – they want to know what is in it for them. They feel that public officials do not understand that well enough, see them as elitist and detached from reality. This causes indifference and creates resentment. It puts the public and public officials at opposing sides, and creates gap.

The present economic crisis has brought more uncertainty in the media as well. Journalists fear a job loss. There are fewer journalists to cover more issues, which leads to less in-depth analysis, more superficiality and self-censorship. A strong political and business pressure ultimately makes the journalists less motivated to understand public service issues and challenges facing public officials. This in turn makes communicators' job even more difficult.

Traditional media are still important, especially the television – they often take over the role of government institutions, especially in revealing corruption, crime, lack of transparency, and in demanding accountability. Social media have been growing for years, along with the Internet penetration and developing new technologies. This creates a digital divide – with young generations immersed in social media activities, and older generations being for a great part out of it. The generational gap widens, demanding from a communication professional to adjust to these new differences among the public.

challenges



The Way forward

In order to cope with the above challenges and make the societies move forward, a mind shift is needed. It does not come easy and by itself only. It requires work, education.

In the socialist mentality, people are used to being told what to do. Initiative and self-motivation are not highly valued. This is why, for the mind shift to happen sooner rather than later, it would be beneficial that the European Union pay more attention to educating public administration in enlargement countries on communication. This issue should be given more attention in negotiations for EU membership – because it affects not only the way communication is handled, but the entire approach to public service, and ultimately the success of a government or an institution – its policy making, strategic planning, transparency, accountability, etc.

A fear of people needs to be overcome – the notion of service to the public needs to be strengthened. This will increase the public trust.

Of course, it is a two-way street. The mind shift is needed on both ends – among public officials and the public – but the burden of change is more on the government, as it has more knowledge, resources and instruments at its disposal to influence the shift.

Dinka Živalj has been a public relations, communications, public affairs, media development and international relations professional for 16 years. She is a member of Steering Committee of the South East Europe Public Sector Communication Association (SEECOM), and a member of the Club of Venice.

As the first Spokesperson of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC), Dinka is responsible for designing and implementing the organization's communication strategy. She leads all RCC communication and media development activities, aimed at promoting mutual cooperation, European and Euro-Atlantic integration, and development of South East Europe.

Dinka previously served as Head of Press and Public Information of the OSCE Mission to Serbia (2006-2008), Political Officer at the OSCE Mission to Croatia (2005-2006), Spokesperson/Media Development Officer of the OSCE Presence in Albania (2003-2005), as well as with the public affairs office (2000-2003) and field offices Zadar and Gracac (1997-2000) of the OSCE Mission to Croatia.

Dinka is currently enrolled into the final year of PhD studies in Information and Communication Sciences. She holds a Master of Science (mr. sc.) degree in International Relations and National Security; and double degree MA in English Language and Literature, Latin Language and Literature

Government communication and cooperation with non-governmental organizations

Matjaž Kek

Senior communication expert in GCO, Slovenia



It seems to me (from today's perspective) that the starry times for communication cooperation between GOV and NGO in Slovenia were during the process of joining EU and during the Presidency of Slovenia. Why: expertise (internal and external) was applied during planning and execution of communication activities, we had political support, expressed also in the appropriate level of budget resources. For sure "the social environment" was much more encouraging, the goals were clearly defined and the level of "need for cooperation" was higher and more realistic. Of course, the role of NGO in a modern society and democratic state is far beyond communication cooperation and I will only slightly touch this area.

I shall try to find out why –after 2008 - the trends in this field are decreasing – in almost all aspects (the level of joint activities, the amount of budget resources allocated on a scope of joint development and success and efficiency).

Economic, social and financial crisis indeed had a lot of influence on this cooperation – may be not that directly, but through government cost cutting programs, lack of long term strategies and overall policies, but also because Slovenia had three different governments in the last five years (not to mention numerous different directors of GCO).

So after ten years of distinguished cooperation (1998–2008) in the field of communication the NGO accomplished not only high level of self esteem, networking and international cooperation skills and infrastructure, but also general government support and more budgetary resources.

And then from 2009 on the level of high principles of transparency of government performance, "open government", public participation in law making system, accountability and so on, different governments have even succeeded to adopt three general standards of overall cooperation with NGO: the special horizontal steering committee was established to discuss all relevant issues between the two partners, a dedicated state secretary was appointed within Prime Minister Office, and a bunch of resolutions were adopted to stimulate and enable better overall cooperation. Even more – special training has been enabled for civil servants for better cooperation with all non government groups (sort as of "government relations" for non government sectors).

But in practice overall cooperation is not very strategically managed, sometimes is only expression of urgent need to solve a certain problem respective ministry is facing, sometimes – because NGO sector brings the problem to the public attention and sometimes –like in our (GCO) case-we still believe that cooperation can bring better results for both sides and especially for citizens.

The all time strong NGOs, like those that deal with consumers' rights and environmental problems are very active, publicly respected and very proactive in relation to government. Much more NGOs that deal with volunteering issues and young people nowadays exists. And others –which perform a lot of social services instead of state bodies-financed by ministries, of course. The others are having a joint platform organization – “Centre for non governmental organizations” (for better internal communication, training, joint projects acting, international cooperation and so on). NGO have also established regional info points, to enable local NGO on the basis of just in time info, expertise help and joint activities in public tenders.

But the overall level of co financing, number of joint long term projects and solid joint results is lower, not stable and more NGO activity driven.

OK., within GCO we have succeeded continuously to maintain a good cooperation with NGO from the beginning in 1998 in both areas –EU communication and government communication (of course one is part of another, but we are taking a distinction between the two, because sometimes EU projects predominantly are or used to be financed exclusively from EU budget).

Why we believe this cooperation is of high value: NGO in some cases have better expertise than ministries, they sometimes can reach the special groups, government can not, and last but not least – they can much more express the interests and proposals of groups of citizens

The basic instrument of cooperation is yearly tender to co finance communication, training or awareness projects on main EU topics or special government topics (which are wider than the ministry issues).

For instance –in 2013 –was EYC-devoted, which found an appropriate focus on NGO: their participation in the coordination committee, co financing their activities which were tailored for “minority and sensitive” groups. On their own- NGO were very active in promoting active citizenship, volunteering citizens rights.

We have to admit, of course, that amount of budget resources allocated in cooperation with NGO has decreased too, in our office. That is also why –in the scope of management partnership – we have tried to engage as many as possible NGO-to carry out the projects-if they had the best offer –“bien entendu”. So they are quite active this year in mobilizing young people who will be first time voters at this year European election.



Council of Europe – World forum for democracy 2013 conclusions (1)

1000 participants from more than 100 countries gathered in Strasbourg, France, on 27-29 November 2013 at the World Forum for Democracy “Rewiring democracy – connecting citizens and institutions in the digital age”, organised jointly by the Council of Europe, the French government, the Alsace Region and the city of Strasbourg.

As highlighted by the Conclusions drawn up from the organisers, the trends recorded with regard to citizens’ confidence in politics, institutions and the representative system as a whole are not encouraging at all. As a matter of fact, political parties are increasingly losing the trust of our citizens, who are looking for ways and means to have their voice heard.

The abovementioned Conclusions draw the attention to the innovative role of the Internet in this context as a catalyzer of a new kind of relationship between the information provider and the user. As a matter of fact, the latter becomes the real subject of a new interactive communication process, where both players put themselves at stake and undertake to transform and re-evaluate their exchange of information. But the participants in the Forum also wondered if the internet phenomenon isn’t also transforming the nature and functioning of democracy.

The WDF aimed to analyse whether citizens participate and influence decisions to a greater extent, and if there is risk that, despite its positive potential, the use of digital communication technologies erode(s) civil and political rights, fragment(s) the democratic debate, and undermine(s) the capacity of representative institutions to shape a common position.

Debates were developed in twenty-one Forum Labs which analysed thirty-three digital participation platforms and initiatives, assessing their impact and the potential risks they carry for human rights and the integrity of democracy. This exercise revealed, among others, that “many of them reinforce the legitimacy, transparency and responsiveness of the governing institutions and help re-build trust between citizens and their representatives. Others, on the contrary, bring direct democracy elements into the representative system and create tension which may in turn reshape the institutional architecture of democracy.”

As the Conclusions stressed, there’s still a long way to try to make digital comms instruments really appetizing and optimize dialogue and the Forum pointed to some crucial tasks ahead:

- encourage/promote change in political parties to enable greater openness, transparency, accountability and responsiveness to grassroots input, including by exploiting e-initiatives
- ensure that e-participation schemes are transparent, auditable, and accountable to participants and the wider community and in conformity with the highest standards on protection of privacy
- step up media literacy to enable citizens to make full use of the opportunities of digital technology for self-empowerment and participation in political processes.

These tasks – as the Conclusions highlight, require strong partnerships between international and national actors who should join efforts as much as possible to communicate for the preservation and affirmation of genuine democratic values.



Anthony Zacharzewski

runs the Democratic Society, a non-partisan membership organisation promoting participation, citizenship and better democracy. His background is in central and local government in the UK. At various times he has been speechwriter at the Department of Health; secretary to the Cabinet Committees on health, food and agriculture; lead official for first-round Sure Start projects in East London and South-West England, and project leader in the Treasury’s internal think tank, the Productivity and Structural Reform Team. He joined Brighton & Hove City Council as Head of Policy in 2006, where he was responsible for strategy, community relations, and sustainability. After nine months on the authority’s board as Acting Director of Strategy & Governance, he left to work for the Society in February 2010.

Anthony Zacharzewski has collaborated with the Club of Venice since 2012 by delivering key notes at its plenary sessions and thematic seminars on the impact of the social networks in the emerging media landscape, focusing on e-democracy trends and citizens’ engagement on line. Anthony has volunteered to share his views with “Convergences” on his participation in the CoE World Forum.

Twitter: @demsoc

¹ <http://hub.coe.int/en/wfd-2013-conclusions/>

² including structured monitoring and evaluation

Impressions from the World Forum for Democracy

#coe_wfd

by Anthony Zacharzewski

When I go to a big, thoughtful event like the World Forum For democracy, I like to write down the 20 things I remember from it as soon as possible after it ends. This is not a worked-up essay, just some rough impressions which I recorded of my thoughts on the train back from Strasbourg to Paris. For all its imprecision, though, I think it gives a sense of the discussions at the event for those who were not able to be present.

People seem to be increasingly coalescing around the idea that we need a common open infrastructure for democracy apps, so that they can share information and overcome sign up barriers. If we can get that right it will be a big step forward, but we need to align research.

Facebook isn't that common platform. It is closed and proprietary, and although there are many citizens there, the way in which they use the platform is about their personal lives not specific lives. In the same way that a politician would not canvas for votes from friends at a birthday party, Facebook is not the place that people go with the expectation of being citizens.

Popvox (from the US) is a brilliant little tool, and I would love to see a version of it for the European Parliament. It would be a very good way of understanding how business goes there, which is different from the way things run in the House of Commons.

There is a possibility that we can rebuild our institutions without a reactionary upheaval, but also much more aware of the different sorts of challenges that fellow democrats face beyond the EU's borders in places like Armenia and Ukraine.

Very few people are now talking about e-democracy as a complete alternative to representative politics. **We heard a couple of politicians at the Strasbourg event claiming that (unnamed) Internet utopians wanted to replace all representative politics with e-democracy. Maybe there are such people around, but none that I met at the conference. Certainly, the common view of everyone I spoke to was that online tools could enhance but never replace off-line democracy, and that the representative still had an important role to play in a more participative environment**

It would be very interesting to establish stronger relations with the Citizen's Foundation from Iceland, who are a great company, great innovators, and massive enthusiasts for our common goals.

The variety of approaches and groups I met in the World Forum was astonishing and the return on the time we spent there marvellous. The Women of Uganda network, which won the democracy innovation prize, was completely new to me.

The voting system was a bit bizarre, given that people didn't have a huge amount of time to take in information about each of projects, but it was very gratifying to get a 4 to one vote that our Networked Networks project in Lewes [<http://lewes.demsoc.org>] made a contribution to furthering democracy.

This was probably the youngest conference I have been to. Thanks to the Council of Europe's efforts to bring the young people in as youth ambassadors. I would imagine the average age was under 40.

I still think that there is a gap around context. Lots of the voting and decision-making parts of democracy are well-covered, because voting is a relatively simple mathematical issue, but we are still short on ways to make context of complex political decisions intelligible to people who have 10 minutes a month, rather than 2 hours a day.

Still on that subject, I am still convinced that liquid democracy (the delegated voting system used by the Pirate Party in Germany) [<http://liquidfeedback.org/>] is an elegant solution to the wrong problem, focusing on delegating votes rather than delegating influence.

The external specialists and organisations and platforms like e-democracy need more opportunities to come together in this international way and build collaboration. It would be great to join similar events more frequently.

Open Government Partnership: Dear Prime Minister...¹

by Anthony Zacharzewski ²

The Open Government Partnership Civil Society network has published an open letter to the PM in advance of the annual summit in London at the end of the month.

The letter acknowledges progress so far, and calls for three stretching new commitments on the part of the Government:

1. Make public who owns and controls companies and trusts, by publishing a beneficial ownership register that meets the standards set out in the Open Data Charter.³ A public register would support good corporate governance and a clean and respected business environment, as well as lift the veil of secrecy that the corrupt and the criminal use to hide their identity.

2. Enable public scrutiny of all organisations in receipt of public money, by opening up public sector contracts and extending transparency standards and legislation. Endorse and implement a system of 'Open Contracting', ensuring public disclosure and monitoring of contracting from procurement to the close of projects, and amend the Freedom of Information Act so that all information held by a contractor in connection with a public service contract is brought within its scope.

3. Bring lobbying out into the open in the UK, by developing a robust, compulsory register of lobbyists. An open and comprehensive register would allow public scrutiny of who is lobbying whom, what they are seeking to influence and how much is being spent in the process.

The letter itself can be seen on the OGP UK Civil Society Network blog.⁴

The Diplomatic Consequences of the Internet: Foreign and Commonwealth Office

The UK Government has a commitment to open policymaking bringing policymaking into line with public expectations and the networked world in which domestic and foreign policy is operating. The UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office is in a strong position to take a lead in this area. It already works with extensive networks of academics, experts, business leaders and other organizations to promote Britain's interests in the world. It also developed a strong online presence that is much respected around the world. Open policymaking is an opportunity to use and extend that online presence to experiment with new ways of engaging wider networks of experts and influencers in the formulation of policy, and of gathering soft information on attitudes and preferences.

The complex issues and relationships in foreign policy mean that policymakers need different approaches that will enable them to plan for open policy development, and access to a range of tools that can be assembled to meet the need. They need to be able to run both open and closed discussions, and to involve groups of widely different sizes. Asynchronous communication is important when networks and conversation may stretch across multiple time zones.

Demsoc designed a series of small-group discussion and deliberations, in a closed environment, for senior FCO staff. Pre event research was done with attendees to ascertain their level of experience of the online tools and what they wanted from the event. Scenarios were then designed around the three strategic priorities: Security, prosperity and consular.

Based around Twitter, but with input from a variety of on and off line sources we designed three very different scenarios, which senior staff could explore and test. These were closed sessions to provide a safe environment to experiment. The facilitators worked with the groups, adapting level of challenge/how the scenario develops depending on the conversation. The tables were designed to have a mix of experience of social media from expert to novice. The small group approach allowed the sharing of experiences and exploration of the scenarios talking through risks of different approaches (e.g. risks of not engaging vs. risks of different types of social media/online engagement).

In between the sessions FCO staff provided 'social media surgeries for diplomats' showing them how to do the basics and sharing learning and best practice from those using social media for diplomacy and foreign policymaking around the world. The workshop was heavily oversubscribed showing a strong demand for these practical skills. We ran the half-day workshop for 70 ambassadors and senior diplomats. Using iPads we facilitated groups of 6-8 people to explore closed twitter worlds. The sessions explored many areas such as how digital can influence and inform every stage of the policy process (Understanding current and predicting future developments; Formulating more robust policy; Implementing policy in new ways; Identifying and building contacts with influencers; and Communicating policy.

For more information on this or any of our projects email us or follow us on Twitter @demsoc

¹ Open Data and Open Government are among the most recent topics added to the Club of Venice agenda. The Club organised a joint seminar with the General Secretariat of the Council on this matter in October 2012 and "Convergences" has well covered this issue in its 2nd number.

² Posted on 8 Oct 2013 in <http://www.demsoc.org/author/anthony-zacharzewski/>

³ See Annex.

⁴ <http://www.opengovernment.org.uk/open-letter-to-the-prime-minister/>.

ANNEXE : G8 OPEN DATA CHARTER

Preamble

1. The world is witnessing the growth of a global movement facilitated by technology and social media and fuelled by information – one that contains enormous potential to create more accountable, efficient, responsive, and effective governments and businesses, and to spur economic growth.
2. **Open data sit at the heart of this global movement.**
3. Access to data allows individuals and organisations to develop new insights and innovations that can improve the lives of others and help to improve the flow of information within and between countries. While governments and businesses collect a wide range of data, they do not always share these data in ways that are easily discoverable, useable, or understandable by the public.
4. **This is a missed opportunity.**
5. Today, people expect to be able to access information and services electronically when and how they want. Increasingly, this is true of government data as well. We have arrived at a tipping point, heralding a new era in which people can use open data to generate insights, ideas, and services to create a better world for all. 6. Open data can increase transparency about what government and business are doing. Open data also increase awareness about how countries' natural resources are used, how extractives revenues are spent, and how land is transacted and managed. All of which promotes accountability and good governance, enhances public debate, and helps to combat corruption. Transparent data on G8 development assistance are also essential for accountability.
7. Providing access to government data can empower individuals, the media, civil society, and business to fuel better outcomes in public services such as health, education, public safety, environmental protection, and governance. Open data can do this by:
 - showing how and where public money is spent, providing strong incentives for that money to be used most effectively;
 - enabling people to make better informed choices about the services they receive and the standards they should expect.
8. Freely-available government data can be used in innovative ways to create useful tools and products that help people navigate modern life more easily. Used in this way, open data are a catalyst for innovation in the private sector, supporting the creation of new markets, businesses, and jobs. Beyond government, these benefits can multiply as more businesses adopt open data practices modelled by government and share their own data with the public.
9. We, the G8, agree that open data are an untapped resource with huge potential to encourage the building of stronger, more interconnected societies that better meet the needs of our citizens and allow innovation and prosperity to flourish.
10. We therefore agree to follow a set of **principles** that will be the foundation for access to, and the release and re-use of, data made available by G8 governments. They are:
 - **Open Data by Default**
 - **Quality and Quantity**
 - **Useable by All**
 - **Releasing Data for Improved Governance**
 - **Releasing Data for Innovation**
11. While working within our national political and legal frameworks, we will implement these principles in accordance with the technical best practises and timeframes set out in our national action plans. G8 members will, by the end of this year, develop action plans, with a view to implementation of the Charter and technical annex by the end of 2015 at the latest. We will review progress at our next meeting in 2014.
12. **We also recognise the benefits of open data can and should be enjoyed by citizens of all nations.** In the spirit of openness we offer this Open Data Charter for consideration by other countries, multinational organisations and initiatives.

Principle 1: Open Data by Default

13. We recognise that free access to, and subsequent re-use of, open data are of significant value to society and the economy.
14. We agree to orient our governments towards open data by default.
15. We recognise that the term government data is meant in the widest sense possible. This could apply to data owned by national, federal, local, or international government bodies, or by the wider public sector.
16. We recognise that there is national and international legislation, in particular pertaining to intellectual property, personally-identifiable and sensitive information, which must be observed.

17. We will:

- establish an expectation that all government data be published openly **by default**, as outlined in this Charter, while recognising that there are legitimate reasons why some data cannot be released.

Principle 2: Quality and Quantity

18. We recognise that governments and the public sector hold vast amounts of information that may be of interest to citizens.
19. We also recognise that it may take time to prepare high-quality data, and the importance of consulting with each other and with national, and wider, open data users to identify which data to prioritise for release or improvement.
20. **We will:**
 - **release high-quality open data that are timely, comprehensive, and accurate.** To the extent possible, data will be in their original, unmodified form and at the finest level of granularity available;
 - **ensure that information in the data is written in plain, clear language**, so that it can be understood by all, though this Charter does not require translation into other languages;
 - **make sure that data are fully described**, so that consumers have sufficient information to understand their strengths, weaknesses, analytical limitations, and security requirements, as well as how to process the data; and
 - **release data as early as possible**, allow users to provide feedback, and then continue to make revisions to ensure the highest standards of open data quality are met.

Principle 3: Usable by All

21. We agree to release data in a way that helps all people to obtain and re-use it.
22. We recognise that open data should be available free of charge in order to encourage their most widespread use.
23. We agree that when open data are released, it should be done without bureaucratic or administrative barriers, such as registration requirements, which can deter people from accessing the data.
24. **We will:**
 - **release data in open format; wherever possible**, ensuring that the data are available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes; and
 - **release as much data as possible**, and where it is not possible to offer free access at present, promote the benefits and encourage the allowance of free access to data. In many cases this will include providing data in multiple formats, so that they can be processed by computers and understood by people.

Principle 4: Releasing Data for Improved Governance

25. We recognise that the release of open data strengthens our democratic institutions and encourages better policy-making to meet the needs of our citizens. This is true not only in our own countries but across the world.
26. We also recognise that interest in open data is growing in other multilateral organisations and initiatives.
27. **We will:**
 - **share technical expertise and experience** with each other and with other countries across the world so that everyone can reap the benefits of open data; and
 - **be transparent about our own data collection, standards, and publishing processes**, by documenting all of these related processes online.

Principle 5: Releasing Data for Innovation

28. Recognising the importance of diversity in stimulating creativity and innovation, we agree that the more people and organisations that use our data, the greater the social and economic benefits that will be generated. This is true for both commercial and non-commercial uses.
29. **We will:**
 - **work to increase open data literacy and encourage people**, such as developers of applications and civil society organisations that work in the field of open data promotion, to unlock the value of open data;
 - **empower a future generation of data innovators** by providing data in machine-readable formats.

So this was cyberutopia? Sofactivism, tribalism, new censorship and trivialization of the public sphere

Transcript of an address to the EU Council and Club of Venice seminar on public communication and the Internet.
Brussels, March 22, 2013

In June 1989 Ronald Reagan announces the end of totalitarianism by virtue of the microchip. 20 years later, Gordon Brown tells us that Rwanda will never happen again thanks to the Internet.

There is a persistent pattern in the recent history of humanity – every time a new means of communication emerges, prophets announce the liberation of the human being, the expansion of democratic participation, and a new step, maybe the definitive step, along the long road to world peace. It happened with the newspaper, the telegraph, the phone, the radio and the television.

Let's cite a prominent example. Marconi himself said that "the arrival of the era of wireless communication will make war impossible, because it will be ridiculous." Of course, Marconi couldn't see it. He died in 1937, when totalitarianism was strong in Europe and leading the way to World War II.

The Internet is no exception. What we can call "cyberutopia" has been the subject of so many happy forecasts, that it will be interesting to see, 20 years after its birth, if they happened or not. Do not be fooled – the internet is no longer "new media". It is already a mature invention.

Even so, in the recent past we have been told:

- We will be able to organize without organizations.
- The Web will let us build super networks.
- We will learn infinite new things thanks to those billions of links.
- These new powers will transform our economy, and, of course, revolutionize politics.
- And someone, rather more pessimistic, even says the Internet will destroy our culture.

So here we go. As one analyst has said:
"And so we come full circle. The ebb and flow of futurism is a curious one. Technology isn't cyclical but it would seem our technological predictions of the future may very well be repeating themselves. Forever. And ever."

Yes, the Internet provides features that would make the political, social and economic conversation much more productive, at least potentially. James Fishkin, one of the fathers of the so-called Deliberative Democracy, in which citizens engage in rational deliberation of different arguments to come to a conclusion, says that this kind of cold, analytic, rational democratic decision making needs the following conditions:

- Accurate and relevant information: If you look for it, you can have it easily and free on the Internet.
- Balance between the various positions on the same dispute. You can have that balance in the Internet, once again, easily and for free.
- Diversity of opinions. Of course, all of them are in the Internet. You can find opinions from one extreme and the other, and all the opinions in the middle.
- And the will of citizens to weight arguments objectively and regardless of who defends them. And here is where the problem comes, as we will see.

So let's see... We have here a space that is the dream of anarchists, liberals, libertarians, rationalists, anti system activists, and leaders of religions, cults and social movements...

Open. Direct. Potentially transparent. Diverse. Participative. Immediate. Multimedia. Free.

Well... This sounds all great, but what we find in the Internet is far from the rational use of all these potentials, and that is the hypothesis that I would like to make in my presentation: The Internet reproduces – and sometimes reinforces – certain patterns in the public affairs discussion that are persistent in the human being, and do not fit well with those prophecies of the cyberutopia. The Internet is no more than a place – even with all its marvellous capabilities and advantages - where human beings behave just as they always did.

This means:

- A place for clickativism, or what I prefer to call “sofactivism”, where you can have millions clicking here and there, but where only a few really committed and interested will make real change, through real and offline activism.
- A place for eternal tribalism, where people get together as always did: with his or her peers, forming tribes, bands, gangs and parties. Where a few lead and the rest just observe and follow.
- As a consequence, a place for trivialization of the public discussion, in which political and social “conversations” are as simple and trivial and archetypical and black and white as they always were in the old European cafés, bars and homes and working places.
- A place with new forms of the old censorship, where the powerful control and the people are as vulnerable as always. And, more than that, where new or old powers control even more.

Let’s take a closer look at these four patterns.

Sofactivism.

In English it is called slacktivism, or clickativism. A mobilization of low intensity, lazy and with low levels of commitment. Here are five examples with comments:

1. The Arab Spring was said to be a Twitter revolution. But the fact is that studies have demonstrated that most of those suppositions were just hype. For example, a study of the activity in Twitter on those days of 2011 shows that most of the tweets came from outside the countries affected, and most of the activity just followed the events that people were following on TV, particularly the most influential of all: Al Jazeera. The study shows the obvious – first come the mass media, and then comes Twitter. Apart from that, social media are influential when they break the threshold of attention by the mass media (television and radio and press).

2. There is some research saying the opposite, but most of it confirms that **Internet does not make people participate more.** The active (a minority) keep being active. And the inactive are still inactive, in spite of the wonders of Internet.

3. This explains why the most popular petition in the new section **“We The People” in the White House** website has around 350.000 signatures, less than 0.002 of the eligible voters. The most popular petition, by the way, tries to “legally recognize Westboro Baptist Church as a hate group”. Whatever that means, it is probably not the most urgent social cause in America. If you take a closer look, you will find there a nice mix of extreme proposals (recall the election or repeal Obamacare), combined with other eccentric ones, such as the substitution of the national anthem for a song by a well known rapist (11.000 signatures).

As you can imagine, and has been demonstrated by some studies, these campaigns do not have any impact at all on officials or politicians, who do nothing for these eccentric and small activities, although it looks good on their homepages.

4. Some sociologists say that this could even promote an effect known as **social loafing**: the more you feel many people are participating in something, the less effort you as an individual put into that something. This was been detected long time ago in the famous **rope-pulling game**: the greater the number of people pulling the rope, the less individual effort they make. Does that happen in the social networks in Internet? There is no evidence, as I said before. It seems that the internet does not increase efforts to participate nor does it lower them.

5. What is apparently spontaneous activism, in many cases responds to **fake identities**, the so called trolls that invade now the public space. You cannot be 15 different people in a public demonstration in the street, but on the Internet you certainly can. In other cases, there are big corporations or big interests behind the apparent spontaneity of sofactivists. The same happens in the “real” or offline world, but it seems that the Internet is specially well suited for this anonymity, sometimes for good, but other times for ill.

As noted by Malcolm Gladwell, in his famous New Yorker article, social activism and mobilization require, always, discipline, commitment, structure, organization, and hierarchies. Sofactivism promotes none of them. Gladwell cites the example of the fight for civil rights by Afro-Americans in the US of the 60s: Quote:

“If Martin Luther King, Jr., had tried to do a wiki-boycott in Montgomery, he would have been steamrollered by the white power structure. And of what use would a digital communication tool be in a town where ninety-eight per cent of the black community could be reached every Sunday morning at church? The things that King needed in Birmingham—discipline and strategy—were things that online social media cannot provide.”

The second and third effects that we notice in the social activity about public affairs in the Internet:

Tribalism and Trivialization

One would be tempted to think that the Internet would at least increase the quality of public participation, not just its volume; and if the Internet provides immense, infinite, resources of communications, the average citizen could at least make good use of that capacity. For example, reading not just one regular newspaper, but reading two or more alternative views.

Well, sorry, but that simply does not happen. When we take a look at those wonderful and fascinating pictures of the blogosphere, we find the reds on one side, the blues on the other, the greens in one place, the yellows in another. The tribe of conservatives does not exchange views with the tribe of progressives. People want to hear and read the arguments of their tribe. There could be cyberbridges uniting people, but the fact is that there aren’t. People do not speak with the enemy, so to speak. They speak in endogenic circles.

That happens in the US. Take a look at the American political blogosphere, with republicans on one side and democrats on the other.

It happens with political books. No one buys conservative books if one is progressive, nor do conservatives buy progressive books.

It happens in the political blogosphere in France, with more colours, because of its multiparty system.

It happens in Germany.

It happens everywhere. For example, in Iran.

It happens not only with blogs, but also on Twitter. See how the people tweeted about the State of the Union Address by Obama, and notice, again and again, the huge polarization of opinions, in favour of Obama on the left, and against Obama on the right.

In short, the Internet does not connect different arguments and people. It does not promote a cool and balanced conversation. The Internet connects tribes and opinions and reproduces the ancient tribalism of human beings.

The fourth pattern that I would tell you about is

New censorship

Take a look at European regulation of television or radio or even the laws regarding defamation and freedom of expression in the written press. They are quite clear. If you have a concession for a TV channel, you have just that: a concession. Radio spectrum capacity is limited, so you have to comply with certain rules to gain access.

That does not happen on the Internet. A six year old kid can type "porn" and get some explicit images to start. Or he or she could type "terrorism".

I am not saying that this is necessarily bad. It depends very much on what you consider acceptable. What I am saying is that all this does not depend on the the will of legitimate governments (or at least not yet). At the moment, it depends mainly on the decisions of Google, Twitter, Yahoo, Microsoft, and other companies; most of them, by the way, American.

They have the freedom to close accounts— as Twitter unilaterally did with a fake account of Pope Francis the first day of his election. They can also manage users' data, start billing for their services without notice, promote certain names and messages for their sponsors, etc., etc.

Governments in authoritarian regimes are not stupid, so they create their own government-controlled platforms. China, has their Weibo system, a quite good substitute for Google and Twitter, but controlled by Chinese officials. In Russia the Duma passed a law last year that permits the censorship of sites that do not comply with the desires of the Putin government.

Democratic governments are not stupid either, of course. And they are doing all they can to control communications, not necessarily in defence of the world peace or the wealth of nations or the benefit of the human species.

Only two days ago, on Wednesday in New York City, the CIA Chief Technologist Officer said in a conference:

"The value of any piece of information is only known when you can connect it with something else that arrives at a future point in time,"

"Since you can't connect dots you don't have, it drives us into a mode of, we fundamentally try to collect everything and hang on to it forever."

So the CIA says: we are watching you. And you are a walking sensor. And we want to have all worldwide information. And we will keep your data forever. And yes, you should be asking about your rights, but we go faster than you. By the way, the conference came after we knew about a Six hundred million dollar deal between the CIA and Amazon for cloud computing analysis.

Yes, it sounds wonderful to talk about Freedom and Openness, and Open Government, and things like that, but we are very far from that happy Arcadia. We are far from the dream of libertarians, and founders of cults and religions and movements. We might well be going in the opposite direction: lack of legal controls in democratic states; overt massive potential or real control of private lives; and second generation censorship in authoritarian regimes. These all speak of a shift in power, and about a new form of censorship, both private and public.

To summarize: it could well be an exaggeration to compare the Internet with a dishwasher, as one historian does when he says:

"The Internet is a post office, newsstand, video store, shopping mall, game arcade, reference room, record outlet, adult book shop and casino rolled into one. Let's be honest: that's amazing. But it's amazing in the same way a dishwasher is amazing—it enables you to do something you have always done a little easier than before."

Yes, it is probably just an exaggeration, but no more than the hype of the cyberutopia that dominates the public debate about the Web today.

So, what can we do to "adapt", as the title of this meeting suggests? How can we adapt to this environment in which, evidently, the Internet is not going to disappear? Let me end by proposing four ideas, at least as an invitation for debate and open discussion:

1. Let's not focus on the Internet more than on the human being who uses it. Let's move to a citizen-centric communication from this internet centrism in which we currently are. This probably means counting more on psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists than on technologists and web-experts. Sorry, web-experts.
2. Let's not create problems that do not exist. Let's stop investing money, time and other resources trying to force citizens to be rational, participative, involved, and committed to public affairs, when the huge majority of citizens are emotional, unengaged, and basically lazy with public affairs.
3. Let's move quickly on regulation. If we put no limits to the control and marketing of private information, it will

probably be too late when we feel the need to do it. The public space on the Internet is unlimited, but somehow is public. It has no sense that we allow people to do things on the Internet that are not allowed in the offline life.

4. When I have specific Internet communications projects, I never consider the Internet isolated from anything, much as I do not consider TV, radio, cinema, newspapers or face to face communications isolated. I do not ask: "what can the Internet provide so I will adapt to it?" On the contrary, I ask "what does my client need so that I can integrate the Internet to his or her needs? To adapt the words of John F. Kennedy: "Ask not what you can do for the Internet; ask what the Internet can do for you."

That is a quite different approach, and it works much better for me.

Ladies and gentleman, I hope we can soon balance the forces of cyber utopia and cyber pessimism, placing ourselves in the virtuous centre of cyber realism. I hope this presentation has been at least useful for setting the context of that debate. Thank you very much.



Luis Arroyo is a sociologist and an expert in political communication. The organisation's clients include the World Bank and some national and local governments.

During his studies in Sociology and Political Sciences, Luis worked for three years at Sigma Dos, a company specialising in electoral surveys. Some years later, he participated in the electoral campaign of the former Spanish president Zapatero and became Chief de Cabinet of the Spanish State Secretary for Communication, Miguel Barroso. In this role, he had to develop and deliver

a wide variety of communication strategies, including the Spanish withdrawal from Iraq in 2004, the legalisation of homosexual marriage, and the European Constitution referendum in 2005.

After three years, Luis went to work for the Spanish Minister Chacón and for Vice-President Fernández de la Vega. He has written two books on Political Communication: *El Poder Político en escena. Historia, estrategias y liturgias de la comunicación política* and *Los cien errores en la comunicación de las organizaciones*.

Luis tweets at: @LuisArroyoM

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Analysis of Facebook-Pages of the 28 European Heads of State and Government

Claus Hörr
Director Press and Media Service, Austrian PM Chancellery

1. Approach and objective

A comparative analysis was conducted in order to evaluate the configuration and communication offer of the official Facebook-Pages of the European Heads of State and Government.

The focus was on the number of Fans (also taking the total number of FB-Users in the respective Member State into account) and the amount of users who are engaging with the content of the Page ("People talking about this").

In addition, the user's interactive communication possibilities were examined (posting frequency, answers to user's comments) during at least the last six months.

In order to get a complete picture, the corresponding twitter accounts were inspected on the number of Followers and Tweets.

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2. Data

For the purpose of this approach, the Facebook and Twitter metrics were collected on the 7th of November 2013, whereas the numbers of Facebook-Users per country are as of 15th of June 2013.

The authenticity of the Facebook-Pages could be verified through links from the related official Government or Party webpages. The Facebook-Pages of Robert Fico (SK) and Zoran Milanović (HR) are most likely official approaches, although it cannot be excluded that they have been created by a third party, as no further information could be found. The examined Facebook-Pages which got more than 100.000 Fans got hundreds of comments per post; therefore it was only possible to spot check communication interaction.

3. Results Facebook-Fans

For 24 of the Heads of State and Government, there is a Facebook-Page existing. The Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia and Poland have not started a Facebook-Page yet. The amount of fans varies in a huge range from 442.562 (Angela Merkel) to 610 (Algirdas Butkevičius):

1	Angela Merkel (DE)	422.562
2	François Hollande (F)	415.079
3	David Cameron (GB)	202.085
4	Victor Ponta (RO)	193.784
5	Viktor Orbán (HU)	183.404
6	Helle Thorning-Schmidt (DK)	144.534
8	Mariano Rajoy Brey (ES)	95.499
9	Elio Di Rupo (BE)	68.933
10	Joseph Muscat (MT)	42.543
11	Enrico Letta (IT)	37.290
12	Andonis Samaras (GR)	25.390
13	Nicos Anastasiades (ZYP)	22.719
14	Zoran Milanović (HR)	14.126
15	Plamen Oresharski (BG)	12.900
16	Werner Faymann (AUT)	9.814
17	Fredrik Reinfeldt (SWE)	9.117
18	Alenka Bratušek (SLO)	8.167
19	Enda Kenny (IRL)	7.656
20	Jyrki Katainen (FIN)	6.613
21	Jean-Claude Juncker (LUX)	6.484
22	Mark Rutte (NL)	4.043
23	Robert Fico (SK)	634
24	Algirdas Butkevičius (LT)	610
25	Jiří Rusnok (CZ)	N/A
25	Andrus Ansip (EST)	N/A
25	Valdis Dombrovskis (LV)	N/A
25	Donald Tusk (PL)	N/A





The above ranking changes noticeably when taking the country's FB-User into account. This comparison is based on the assumption that the fans of the Heads of State and Government are also mostly citizens of their country. The more prominent the Head of State, the higher might the proportion of supporters from other countries be. Thus, the size of the country is taken into consideration:

1	Joseph Muscat (MT)	17,73%
2	Helle Thorning-Schmidt (DK)	4,52%
3	Viktor Orbán (HU)	4,17%
4	Nicos Anastasiades (ZYP)	4,06%
5	Victor Ponta (RO)	3,23%
6	Jean-Claude Juncker (LUX)	2,70%
7	Pedro Passos Coelho (POR)	2,63%
8	Angela Merkel (DE)	1,63%
9	François Hollande (F)	1,48%
10	Elio Di Rupo (BE)	1,33%
11	Alenka Bratušek (SLO)	1,07%
12	Zoran Milanović (HR)	0,81%
13	Andonis Samaras (GR)	0,60%
14	David Cameron (GB)	0,59%
15	Mariano Rajoy Brey (ES)	0,53%
16	Plamen Oresharski (BG)	0,50%
17	Werner Faymann (AUT)	0,33%
18	Enda Kenny (IRL)	0,32%
19	Jyrki Katainen (FIN)	0,28%
20	Fredrik Reinfeldt (SWE)	0,18%
21	Enrico Letta (IT)	0,16%
22	Algirdas Butkevičius (LT)	0,05%
23	Mark Rutte (NL)	0,05%
24	Robert Fico (SK)	0,03%
25	Jiří Rusnok (CZ)	N/A
25	Andrus Ansip (EST)	N/A
25	Valdis Dombrovskis (LV)	N/A
25	Donald Tusk (PL)	N/A

Especially the biggest EU-Member States (DE, F, GB, and ES) experienced the greatest change in the ranking. Malta's Head of State Joseph Muscat takes the lead with an outstanding 17.73% fans from own country.

Twitter-Followers

The number of followers on twitter seems to be related to the country's population and does not necessarily correspond to the interaction rate on the Facebook-Page or the twitter account. David Cameron's is the top Twitter-Profile with almost 2.5 million followers, followed by François Hollande (562.160), Mariano Rajoy Brey (467.904), Enrico Letta (230.434), Mark Rutte (202.584) and Angela Merkel (118.882). Three Heads of State and Government [Bratušek (SLO), Oresharski (BG) and Rusnok (CZ)] do not have any twitter account at all.

Interaction

Only 6 out of 28 Facebook-Pages enable users to open their own topics by allowing comments on their timeline [Bratušek (SLO), Letta (IT), Faymann (AUT), Orbán (HU), Juncker (LUX) and Thorning-Schmidt (DK)]. Therefore, most of the users are dependent on posts published by the pages administrators.

The administrator's engagement varies from almost 5 posts per day [Ponta (RO)] to less than one per week [Samaras (GR) and Milanović (HR)]. Overall, most of the examined pages publish 3-5 posts per week.

Not only does the administrator's engagement and posting frequency vary on a large scale, but also do the user's comments. For example on Cameron's Facebook-Page hundreds of user comments are found for each post, on Angela Merkel's Facebook-Page even thousands. Therefore, only spot checks could be made which may be a reason why answers to user questions had been found only on Werner Faymann's Facebook-Page.

The published content varies dramatically; from sole press texts [Muscat (MT)] and formal descriptions of the day-to-day political work [Samaras (GR)] to private insights [Bratušek (SLO)]. The focus is set on publishing pictures with a short text attached.

Most Facebook-Pages are used as an additional channel to distribute press texts and pictures in a very formal way [Juncker (LUX)]. Only a few provide some more private insights and convey the impression of adding value to the users and trying to establish a communication with and between them [Viktor Orbán (HU)].

GREECE AWAKENING AND THE GREEK PRESIDENCY CHALLENGES

After the publication in Convergences n° 3 of Andreas Katsaniotis' "manifesto" for a reform of state communication, we are pleased to host in our new number of the Club review two interesting documents recently drawn up by the Greek Ministry of Finance.

One of the two documents has an emblematic title: "GREECE IS CHANGING".

The second one is the speech delivered by Ioannis Stournaras, Minister of Finance of Greece and President of the "EcoFin" Council, to foreign media representatives on 8 January 2014 on the occasion of the opening of the new semester of Presidency of the Council of the EU.

Through the lines, it is worth to quote two statements:

- "We assume the Greek Presidency, not as a country in crisis, but as a country in recovery."
- "In the run up to the European elections in May, we have to seize the momentum to bring closer every European citizen, increase ownership and raise awareness, in every part of Europe, on the decisions made at the European level with a direct impact on their everyday life."

Greece is changing: Reforms, investments, growth.

Towards a more integrated Europe

In 2010, the Greek government agreed with its European Partners and the IMF on a multiannual package providing the necessary funding to Greece facing then a debt crisis due to a high fiscal deficit and an accelerating loss of competitiveness that had led to its cut off from the international capital markets. The financial support reached approximately €200 billion and was followed by a strong conditionality with respect to the necessary structural reforms that Greece had to implement in order to return to a sustainable growth track. **After almost 4 years of reforms and fiscal consolidation, the level of adjustment is impressive by any means of comparison.**

In terms of **fiscal consolidation**, the general government deficit declined sharply from a 15.6 % of GDP in 2009 to a projected 2,2% of GDP **in 2013** producing, for the first time after almost a decade, a **primary surplus**

of 1,2%. Greece's fiscal consolidation effort was the largest ever recorded by a developed country and, remarkably, it was achieved despite a sharp decline in output.

Coming to the external adjustment, the negative gap in the **current account**, which reached 14.9 % of GDP in 2008, has been **almost entirely eliminated and is expected to reach a surplus of 0,9% in 2013**. This was due to strong gains in competitiveness (Unit Labour Cost is now lower than at the time Greece joined the euro), a sharp decline in imports and a gradual rebound in the export activity.

The **rebalancing of the financial sector** which was hit hard during the crisis is currently underway. The four systemic Greek banks have been recapitalized, while smaller ones were restructured or resolved. Also savings are gradually returning to the banking system.

In the **structural reforms** front, **Greece implemented a series of reforms that helped to close the competitiveness gap and create an investment-friendly environment**. Important reforms were undertaken in almost all areas of economic activity, with the most significant of them implemented in the labour market, the pension system, the health system and the tax administration. As a consequence of these reforms, in recent years the **OECD** consistently ranks **Greece as the most responsive of its member countries in adopting its growth-friendly recommendations**.

Greece's significant **competitiveness gains** as well as the recently provided investment incentives offer significant investment opportunities. Thus, **foreign direct investment in Greece** shows already a positive trend upwards.

After four years of adjustment programmes, the hard efforts and sacrifices of the Greek people are starting to pay off. According to the **latest estimates, 2014 will mark the exit of the country from the six years recession** while in the following years Greece will experience robust, gradually rising growth rates that will be based on sustainable factors such as **exports, tourism, innovation, entrepreneurship** and foreign direct investment, while **major structural reforms are planned for the product market, the business environment and the public administration**. On this ground, one of the most worrying macroeconomic figures, the debt to GDP ratio, will radically de-escalate, while unemployment is also expected to enter a downward path.

Greece assumes the rotating Presidency of the EU council in a time of what can be described as a transitional phase for Europe. The debt crisis and the associated recession and unemployment undermined the confidence of EU citizens to the very idea of European integration. But Europe needs now to move forwards not backwards. More jobs and sustainable growth are therefore political priorities for the Greek presidency.

As an equal partner, a member-state of the European Union and of the Eurozone, Greece will be representing a European Union that must show its commitment to great values such as solidarity, the European social state and the value of a European model for competitiveness and growth that can reaffirm the European project at the hearts and minds of the people of Europe.

Greek Presidency of the Council of the EU Economic and financial affairs

News Conference
Athens, 8 January 2014

I would like to welcome you to Greece and thank you for your presence in today's briefing on issues regarding the Greek Presidency, and, in my capacity as the ECOFIN Chairman, on issues regarding the Economic and Financial Affairs Council.

Over the next six months we will have the opportunity to meet on a regular basis. I am, therefore, looking forward to a constructive cooperation with you.

I am very glad to speak before journalists with wide experience and deep understanding of the European affairs. Your contribution will be highly appreciated for a successful presidency.

In the run up to the European elections in May, we have to seize the momentum to bring closer every European citizen, increase ownership and raise awareness, in every part of Europe, on the decisions made at the European level with a direct impact on their everyday life.

By assuming the Presidency of the European Union, Greece will face a real challenge.

A number of issues, we will be dealing with, are complex and demanding, especially considering the tight time-frame.

You are all aware that the European Parliament will conclude its work in April in view of the May elections. **Therefore, our Presidency will be de facto frontloaded.**

Europe is still in the process of fiscal consolidation while the first signs of recovery are already visible. Unemployment

has stabilised, although at unacceptably high levels, particularly in countries that are under adjustment programmes. Broader social condition remains tough. For this reason we need to focus on the promotion of social cohesion and the safeguarding of stability and welfare for everyone.

The need for restoring normal lending conditions to the economy is crucial for supporting return to growth and stimulating job creation.

Greece has come a long way since 2009.

Thanks to the sacrifices of the Greek people and the support of our European partners, we managed to stand on our feet, and reaffirmed our mutual commitment towards the European value of solidarity.

We assume the Greek Presidency, not as a country in crisis, but as a country in recovery.

We wish to contribute to the deepening and strengthening of our economic and political partnership, building on the significant results of the Lithuanian Presidency.

Indeed, the Lithuanian Presidency has successfully launched and completed many key initiatives through a complex legislative process and deserves warm congratulations.

At this point, I would like to take the opportunity to praise my Lithuanian colleague, Mr Rimantas Šadžius, who has managed to handle very delicate issues and met them with a high sense of responsibility and sound knowledge.

Deepening of the EMU: Coordination of Economic Policies and Social Dimension

By assuming the Presidency of the ECOFIN Council, Greece will work towards further deepening the integration of the EMU and strengthening the coordination of national economic and fiscal policies, in order to preserve the integrity of the common currency and promote the necessary growth-enhancing reforms.

In the same context, the Greek Presidency will focus on ways of strengthening the social dimension of the EMU; we consider this dimension a prerequisite for cohesion and solidarity in the Eurozone.

European Semester

Following Ireland's successful management of the European semester process, Greece will seek to effectively manage the **fourth European Semester**.

Our aim is to enhance the credibility of the procedure and promote the systematic evaluation of reforms in the EU, in particular in policy areas identified by the December European Council, such as reinforcing tax and other incentives for job creation, continuing the modernization of education and training systems and fostering innovation.

This year, the European Commission is planning to submit Country Specific Recommendations after the European Parliament elections. This will be a challenging exercise for our Presidency, since we will have to manage the process within a very strict timeframe. It is for this reason that we urge all parties involved to demonstrate constructive cooperation and strong engagement.

Banking Union

Completing the **banking union** is a prerequisite for strengthening trust and increasing liquidity in the European economy, as well as safeguarding financial stability in Europe.

Following the final agreement recently reached by the legislators on the Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive (DGS) and the Bank Recovery and Resolution Directive (BRR), the Greek Presidency will seek to progress further the creation of a strong and successful banking union.

We particularly welcome the agreement reached in the Council on the Single Resolution Mechanism. **Finalizing the SRM framework is a major priority of the Greek EU Council Presidency.** Therefore, we look forward to a fruitful cooperation at the trilogues with the European Parliament and the Commission. We will strive to bring close Council's and Parliament's positions and to have a deal acceptable by all parties.

We are fully aware that we will have a little more than three months to complete it. Therefore, time is of the essence and we should all be quite flexible and show a sense of responsibility, advocating the need to build a stronger eurozone and to reinforce citizen's trust.

Long - term financing of the economy

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) constitute the backbone of the European economy, representing 99% of all European firms, corresponding to 58% of total turnover in the EU and accounting for 70% of employment in the EU.

Hence, their healthy growth is a key driver for EU competitiveness and investment.

Acknowledging the crucial role of the SMEs, the Greek Presidency will advance discussions for the **financing of the economy, in particular SMEs' facilitation of access to financing**, aiming to enhance sustainable growth and promote the creation of new jobs.

We consider as particularly important a number of initiatives, such as the joint initiative of the European Commission and the European Investment Bank (EIB) for the financing of the economy, especially the facilitation of access to financing for SMEs, the recommendations of the High Level Expert Group for the financing of growth, the capital increase of the European Investment Fund and the Long-term Investment Funds Regulation related to the financing of infrastructure projects and SMEs.

Taxation

In the area of taxation, the Council's work will not be affected by the termination of the current legislative term. It is highly important to carry on with the appropriate actions, at the European level, against taxation practices which undermine citizens' and investors' confidence and encourage tax fraud and tax evasion. In relation to third countries, we will strive to promote the exchange of best practices, avoid harmful tax practices and exploit the full benefits of the internal market.

During the next six months, the Greek Presidency will promote all pending legislative or other initiatives to tackle these problems.

At the same time, we acknowledge the potential link between the digitalisation of the economy and the ongoing work in the Council on tackling tax evasion, tax fraud and aggressive tax planning. Therefore, the Greek Presidency will follow up discussions, in the context of the High Level Working Group, as regards tax aspects of the digital economy.

Reform of the financial sector supervisory framework

The work of the Greek Presidency will also aim to revise the **regulatory framework for the supervision of the financial sector**, in order to strengthen trust and increase liquidity in the European economy.

The Greek Presidency will contribute to a more secure and competitive **European payments market**, which will allow lower charges, transparency and a wide range of facilities for the benefit of consumers. In this respect, the Greek

Presidency will work towards the adoption of the Payment Accounts Directive which will maximise the benefits of the Single Market for the European consumers.

In the area of **capital markets**, the Presidency will put emphasis to the completion of work on legislative proposals, relating to the reform of capital markets supervision (Markets in Financial Instruments- MiFID/ MiFIR) as well as to the promotion of discussions on the benchmarking legislative proposal, which provides sufficient protection for both consumers and investors.

Regarding the **insurance sector**, the Greek Presidency will work on promoting coordination, transparency and supervision of the private and occupational insurance sector and its selling practices, through the integration and implementation of the relevant supervisory frameworks.

The annual EU Budget for 2014

In the area of the EU Budget, the Ministry of Finance has set the following priorities:

- (a) To ensure the smooth execution of the 2014 EU Budget, on the basis of the principle of sound financial management.
- (b) To establish the guidelines for the 2015 EU Budget, by taking into account only feasible assumptions and realistic estimations, so as to avoid consecutive amendments during its implementation.
- (c) To conduct the discussions on the discharge to the European Commission for the 2012 EU Budget execution.
- (d) To protect the EU's economic interests.
- (e) To further elaborate and evaluate the future revision of the Own Resources System, under the scope of ensuring the smooth and timely financing of EU policies.

EU Representation in the G20

Finally, the Greek Presidency will work on the effective and thorough preparation of the **G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meetings** within the ECOFIN Council.

We look forward to a close cooperation with the Government of Australia, which has assumed the G20 Presidency.

During our Presidency, two G20 Finance Ministers meetings have been planned, which I will be attending: the first meeting will be held on 22-23 February in Sydney and the second on 11 April in Washington.

The Greek Presidency will contribute to the formulation of the EU's common position on G20 priority issues, such as economic growth and job creation, financing of long-term investments and tax transparency.

**Save the date
in your calendar!**



The EU Greek Presidency
General Secretariat of Information
and Communication

in cooperation with the Club of Venice

organise a seminar on

“PUBLIC COMMUNICATION: REGAINING CITIZENS' CONFIDENCE IN TIMES OF CRISIS”

in Athens

on 27-28 MARCH 2014

Focus on :

- Communication on European recovery and its impact on the European Elections debate, with discussion on the quest for re-gaining citizens' confidence in Europe: the role of Member States and EU institutions
- Communication on youth employment: safeguarding social cohesion and political stability

Europa nelle lingue del mondo (Europe in the world's languages)

A User Guide to European citizenship

by Tiziana Antonelli, PM office, Italy
Department for European Policies

A website, a commercial, and a survey to help new European citizens to get to know the EU's institutions and to fully enjoy their rights

In the European Year of Citizens 2013, the Department of European Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (which incorporates the National Contact Point for the EYC) has, for the first time in this country, launched a communications initiative directed to naturalized Italian citizens of non-European extraction, entitled: "Europe in the world's languages".

The latest UN data (2013) confirms the fact that Europe – with 72 million international migrants – is the world's principal destination for emigrants. There are 33,3 million non-European foreigners (individuals who are not citizens of the countries in which they reside) living in the territories of the Member States of the EU, 6,6% of the total population, whereas there are almost 49 million Europeans who were born outside the EU country in which they live (9,7% of the total population).

The project "Europe in the languages of the world" – financed by the Management Partnership Agreement and run by the cooperative "Programma Integra" in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior [cfr. factsheet] – was envisioned in the light of this data, in order to familiarize new Italian citizens (who are therefore new European citizens) with the values, activities and opportunities promoted by the European Union.

The initiative was previewed at the last plenary session of the Club of Venice where it obtained the warm approval of the more than 70 "institutional communicators" present at the meeting. It is therefore with great pleasure that we present this initiative to the readers of *Convergences*, in the hope that it may constitute an example of best practice and be an inspiration for similar initiatives in other States.

The official launch in Italy took place on the occasion of the closing event for the European Year of Citizens 2013 organised by the National Contact Point. The event was attended by the Minister for European Affairs, Enzo Moavero Milanesi, the Minister for Integration, Cécile Kyenge, and the Under-Secretary for Education, University and Research, Gian Luca Galletti. They were joined by more than 200 students, who engaged in dialogue with the political authorities present in a lively "question time".

Europa nelle lingue del mondo is a communication and awareness project addressing foreign naturalized Italian citizens. It is financed, in Management Partnership Agreement, by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers' Department for European policies, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was designed within the perspective of the current European Year of Citizens' activities with two aims, that of explaining to the above mentioned citizens how to benefit from their EU rights and that of opening a public debate both on the EU's future and on the reforms needed to improve the European citizens' life.

Aims of the project:

- To inform the new naturalized Italian, and therefore European, citizens on the EU's activities and on European citizenship rights entitlements;
- To analyze the perception/knowledge of the European dimension of citizenship among the new Italian citizens.

Period of implementation: April 2013 – May 2014

Target group: foreign naturalized Italian citizens

Activities:

The project provides instruments to inform new Italian citizens regarding European Union citizenship, the EU's founding principles, European citizenship rights and EU training and employment opportunities.

The educational campaign makes use the following instruments:

- The www.nuovicittadinieuropei.it website, which supplies detailed information on the European Year of Citizens and on the EU institutions, thematic sheets regarding travelling, living, studying and accessing health structures in other EU countries and EU training and employment opportunities. The Italian website is translated into Arabic, Bengali and Russian in order to reach those new citizens having a poor knowledge of the Italian language.

Why Arabic, Bengali and Russian? Because they are the main languages – not current in the EU – spoken among the foreign citizens applying and obtaining Italian citizenship. Thus, we want to give to the new Italian and European citizens another instrument to familiarize them with their citizenship rights. For all those languages spoken both in the European Union and by the new Italian citizens we refer to the European Commission websites. Among which we here mention **Your Europe**, from which we also drew some information for our website, dedicated to those EU citizens who want to know their European citizenship rights.



Nicoletta Basili
Responsabile ufficio progettazione
e comunicazione

- Informative brochures distributed to the citizenship town offices of Rome, Milan and Naples, containing information on European citizenship rights, and summarizing the website's rich contents.
- An informative commercial, which will be broadcasted on the web and on thematic TV channels, addressing both foreign naturalized Italian citizens and the entire citizenry. This highlights the role of information within the knowledge and awareness process relating to European citizenship rights and stresses the pivotal role of such awareness in the integration process of foreign naturalized Italian citizens'.
- Workshop sessions in order to present the project and to investigate knowledge/perception of European citizenship rights. Workshops will be organized in Rome, Milan and Naples, and will involve a total of 100 participants.
- A public-opinion poll, publicized on this website, on social networks and on informative brochures, in order to investigate the knowledge/perception of the European dimension of citizenry among the new Italian citizens.

Organizations in charge

Programma integra s.c.s. is a social co-operative which since 2005 carries out activities aimed to promote migrants citizens and refugees' integration paths in the city of Rome.

The co-operative offers assistance and socio-legal consultancy services, career counseling and intercultural mediation for migrants and refugees. Furthermore, it carries out projects aimed at training and work placing, improving the language skills and promoting social and housing autonomy.

Among its tasks Programma integra disseminates information and raises awareness on migration, intercultural and citizenry issues through the www.programmaintegra.it portal, a periodic newsletter and event organization within the Roma Capital City Center for migrations, asylum and social integration.

The **Management Partnership Agreement** was constituted in Italy in 2008 in order to carry out the EU information and communication strategy, through annual information plans jointly implemented by the European Commission, the European Parliament and the European Policies Department of the Presidency of the Council, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During its first five years of activity, the Management Partnership Agreement has carried out campaigns and initiatives, thanks to tens of active portals, hundreds of events and over 80 millions of global contacts, aimed to promote the European elections, to support the encounter between the Italian euro representatives and the citizens, to launch initiatives and projects on youth, to debate on the economic-financial crisis and on the strategies for a smart, sustainable and inclusive development. Its specific task for 2013, designated as the European Year of Citizens, is to inform citizens on the EU opportunities, through the promotion of the knowledge and values of the European citizenry, in specific reference to the policies and programs in support of the European single market and of the economic and social development.

The project is carried out with the participation of Milan City Council, Naples City Council and Rome Capital.

For information:
Programma integra
Via Assisi, 41 – 00181 Roma
Phone: 0678850299
e-mail: info@programmaintegra.it
www.programmaintegra.it



The website added value: translations of all the contents in 3 non EU languages:
Arabic
Russian
Bengali



Because they are the main languages - not current in EU – spoken among foreign citizens applying and obtaining the Italian citizenship.
We want to give to the new Italian and European citizens another instrument to familiarize with their EU citizenship rights.



..... to inform the new naturalized Italian citizens → The brochures distributed to the citizenship town offices of Rome, Milan, Naples in the occasion of the oath of citizenship



..... to inform the new naturalized Italian citizens → Workshop sessions



- Next workshops →
- 1st focus group in Rome
 - intercultural mediators / new Italian citizens
 - to analyze the knowledge of the EU citizenship
 - to ask/understand the best way to inform the new Italian citizens

Next workshops →

The main target group: people who work in the informational services addressing migrants



..... to inform the new naturalized Italian citizens → an informative commercial



A motion graphic that shows the EU citizenship rights will be spread through the web and thematic TV channels.

..... to analyze the perception/knowledge of the European dimension of citizenship

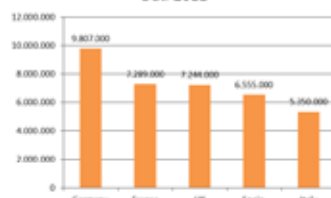


..... a public-opinion poll created on the basis of the Eurobarometer survey which addressed the EU citizens between 2010 and 2012

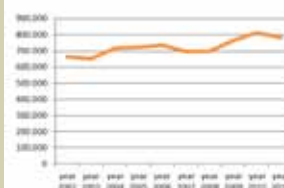
distributed through the brochures and on the website

.... to conclude, some considerations
Europe is the first continent of destination of migrants: 72 millions
In the European Union there are 33,3 millions migrants, in 2008 they were 31,8 millions
They are the 6.6% of the total population.
In EU there are 48 millions people born outside the current borders of their country of residence.

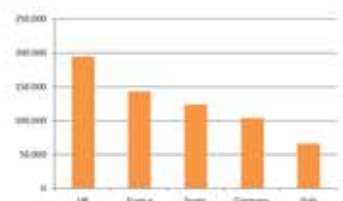
Dati 2011



Acquisition of citizenship in EU Member States 2002-2011



The top-five Member States that granted citizenship in 2011 (They accounted for about 78% of all new citizenships in the EU)



In 2010 the European Union asked to EU citizens:

'Are you aware of your European citizenship rights?'

Between 2010 and 2012 the Eurobarometer concluded that:

EU citizens are not fully benefiting from their rights because they are not aware of them

European Year of Citizens 2013
www.europa.eu/citizens-2013

The aim is to boost the debate on EU citizenship and inform EU citizens of their rights.

The project 'Europe in the world's languages' was designed within the current European Year of Citizens' celebrations.

The Management Partnership Agreement and Programma Integrazione wondered:

What about the **foreign naturalized Italian citizens**? Are they aware of their EU citizenship rights?

Are they informed of their EU citizenship rights when they acquire the Italian citizenship and become, therefore, EU citizens?

Why the Management Partnership Agreement and Programma Integrazione?

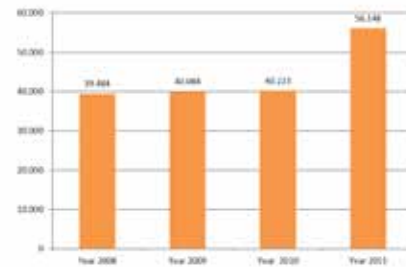
The Management Partnership Agreement – European Commission, European Parliament, European Peoples' Party, Department of the Presidency of the Council of the Ministers – was constituted in Italy in 2008 in order to carry out the EU information and communication strategy.

Programma Integrazione is a social cooperative that carries out activities aimed to promote the migrants citizens and refugees' integration paths in the city of Rome and in Italy.

Europe in the world's language aims to:

1. **INFORM** the **new Italian citizens**, and therefore European citizens, on the EU activities and on the European citizenship rights entitlement
2. **ANALYZE** the perception/knowledge of the European dimension of citizenship among the **new Italian citizens**

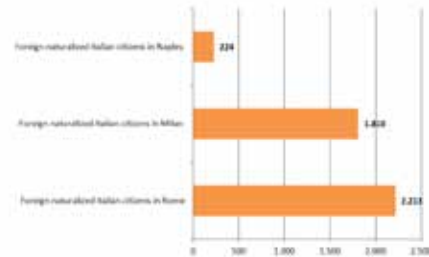
How many migrants acquire the Italian citizenship each year?



Where are the foreign naturalized Italian citizens from?



Focus on Naples – Milan – Rome Year 2012



Italian citizenship: the main naturalization procedures

The citizenship acquisition is automatic as a result of Italian parents/ancestors (*ius sanguinis vs ius soli*).

The acquisition by naturalization occurs after 10 years of legal residence for non-EU citizens and after 4 years for EU citizens.

The acquisition by marriage to an Italian citizen occurs automatically after 2 years of legal residence.

The citizenship is granted to a person born and legally residing in Italy up to legal age, and under declaration of their desire to become citizen.

The acquisition by adoption.

Instruments of the Educational Campaign designed by the project Europe in the world's languages

The website
www.europaitalia.eu

Public-opinion poll

Informative brochures

Workshop sessions

Informative commercial

Civil society media seminar

Peter Lindvald-Nielsen
Head of Communication EESC

Nearly 200 communications experts from civil society organisations, EU and national public authorities, academia and the media met in Brussels on 25-26 November for the 7th annual civil society media seminar organised by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in partnership with the European Parliament (EP).

The seminar, for which the EESC enjoyed support from other institutions and the Club of Venice, was divided into four parts: branding and European image-building, communicating the cost of non-Europe, new media and the challenges facing the EP election campaign.

The clock is ticking

The event took place less than 180 days before the next European elections and there was a palpable sense of urgency in the room about the need to find new ways and strategies for informing people about Europe and reaching out to citizens.

Jane Morrice, EESC Vice-President in charge of communications, set the tone for discussions, by stating in her opening speech that “we should do more to stop people from seeing Brussels as faceless, distant and elitist”. She suggested a rethink of communications strategies before May 2014 and urged everybody, European, national and regional authorities, as well as influential civil society organisations, to “help us make Europe matter to the folks back home – because it does matter.”

In a similar vein, Emily O'Reilly, a former Irish and now European Ombudsman said “My life’s work has been about finding ways to connect with people”. She believed that the failure to communicate lay at the heart of more and more public complaints. Deploring the fact that the EU discourse has been invaded by the “alienating language of the geek and the expert”, she quoted the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, and advised communicators to “Think like a wise man, but communicate in the language of the people.”

Can you brand a place as you do a running shoe?

The panel discussion on EU branding posed a challenging question: if marketing, communication and branding concepts work for products, services and companies, why shouldn't they work for countries, or even for the EU?

Discussions heard opposing views from corporate strategists and those who said that Europe cannot be compared to a product, as it lacked the clarity and impact of a corporate brand.

In a globalised, interdependent world, a place's reputation is its greatest asset. Many argued that reputations and brands, which largely depend on people's perceptions that are built over long periods and seldom alter, are very difficult to change. We must not delude ourselves into thinking that the



image of a country can be changed by coming up with a new logo or a new slogan, said one of the participants. In a similar vein, others warned public communicators against following the commercial communications approach adopted by large corporations. “Voters are not consumers, and there are more differences than similarities between a place and a running shoe”, stated one. Turning to the EU, one participant said that the 28-nation bloc was overloaded with logos, slogans and identities and what it needed more than new ones was a new narrative. The image of an organisation or political entity should be built on what it actually “delivers” and on how and when, said many. In this context, they claimed that now, at a time of greater transparency, greater engagement and heightened scrutiny, delivery is in fact the brand. “We can't change the image of the EU with logos and brands. It's much more about delivering policy”.

Communicating the cost of non-Europe

Europe-bashing is a favourite pastime of many and the EU has grown used to being a scapegoat if something that goes wrong on the continent. To counter such criticism, the EU has been actively communicating the various benefits it has brought to the general public, consumers and businesses across the continent. One problem with this strategy, which aims to communicate the concrete, tangible results of European integration, is that it sometimes suffers as a result of too many actors claiming credit for the EU's achievements.

The seminar discussed an alternative approach for gaining support for Europe: focussing on what people would lose if the EU did not exist, often referred to as “the cost of non-Europe”. The starting point for discussions was an opinion adopted by the EESC last year on the cost of stalled European integration.

Many participants agreed that it was relatively easy to quantify this cost and said that the figures were available. Following a recent study on the cost of non-Europe, it is

estimated that greater cooperation could generate savings of between EUR 800 million and EUR 8 billion in development policy, for example, EUR 20 billion in aviation, more than EUR 13 billion in the defence sector, and EUR 140 million a year through small-scale initiatives such as codifying private international law.

Relating to these huge figures may not be easy, yet conveying the message that dismantling the EU comes at a significant cost is “absolutely crucial”, said many. Questions remain over how to communicate the cost of non-Europe without prompting blame-games between Brussels and national capitals or being derided by the media for whitewashing problems.

In Hungary, a successful campaign on the cost of non-Europe was run using a vast range of communications means, including TV and radio spots, sound-bites, the internet, social media and live events. Animated clips showed how typical features of Hungarian life are sustained by the Union. An ‘EU calculator’ on the campaign website enabled people to measure the role of EU support in their own lives. Despite reaching vast swathes of the population and hitting its targets, the campaign was nevertheless denounced as “pro-EU brainwashing” by euro-sceptics. Having said that, Europe is also much more than just what one can measure in purely economic and financial terms.

New media, old problems

The media landscape is no longer what it used to be. Technological progress has spawned a plethora of channels and platforms, made almost everyone a journalist and created a staggering amount of content.

The panel on the impact of the changing media landscape for public communication concluded that the EU institutions have little choice but to master new facilities, such as Twitter, digital press packs, YouTube audiovisuals and the like.

They have to be aware that new media bring a greater demand for transparency. Many argued that public institutions should think carefully before engaging with people online. If you want to embark on an online consultation and remain credible, one participant said, you have to think through the possible outcomes. There is no shortage of examples of ill-thought-out internet or Twitter campaigns that brought demands the organisations did not want or were unable to follow.

The EU must avoid the temptation to focus on quantitative rather than qualitative results: having the largest number of followers is not necessarily a mark of success, said a number of participants. Organisations and institutions should avoid focussing on short-term impacts rather than building up a long-term reputation.

Some warned public communicators against focussing on tools over content. Using social media properly is less about tools and platforms and more about what the organisation stands for. Communicators should “embrace complexity, should not try to dumb down, and must take the people they are trying to contact seriously”, said one of the speakers.

Setting sights on the European elections in May 2014

The last panel discussion focussed on the communication challenges of the 2014 European election campaign. The first phase of the European Parliament’s communication campaign kicked off in September. This will be followed by a ‘themes’ phase, looking at what the EP does, then ‘Go to Vote’, and finally the outcome, or what happens next.

Resources include a strong online presence, the Facebook page with more than 1 million fans, and the election website online. The communication products include a TV spot to be broadcast on national channels, ‘TED’-style events and candidates’ debates. An inauguration ceremony for the Commission President is also planned. First and foremost, Parliament seeks to create a ‘buzz’ by building up and spreading the word online.

The message is not “vote because you love the EU”, but “vote because you want to set the direction of Europe”, it was said.

Many participants were unable to hide their concern at the insufficient cooperation between EU institutions. Europe does “act, react and have an impact”, but how can this be demonstrated to the electorate? One of the speakers argued that the EU institutions may themselves contribute to the level of ignorance and confusion by often reacting individually and then failing to coordinate communications initiatives.

Some speakers claimed that the economic crisis has opened the door to far more critical voices, and more challenges to the European process. This has led to the EU having more of a presence in people’s daily lives, but as a result, the debate in some Member States is turning towards the restoration of powers to national governments. “We may see more of this in the run-up to the elections”, said one speaker.

Only one-third of European citizens feel they are sufficiently informed about European issues, only one-third feel their voices are heard at EU level and only one-third trust the EU. Giving people information, meeting them and showing the impact on people’s lives is the best way of persuading them to vote, considered some of those present.

Others cautioned against seeing more communication as a “quick fix”. “The EU communicates more when it is in trouble” said one, and went on to add that that the pro/anti-EU debate is a sign of a healthy democracy. The main topic will be how to end the euro crisis, and voters will have a stake in electing a Commission president with a political programme.

Many participants believed that party and national campaigns – run through existing channels – are more effective than institutional ones, and that information should be decentralised to appeal to journalists in the Member States. Good timing is crucial.

Closing the seminar, European Parliament Vice-President Othmar Karas said that the success of the communications campaign depended largely on everybody’s involvement in getting the message across. The upcoming European elections will be very different as the European public will have much more power to decide what does or doesn’t happen in Europe. He concluded with an appeal to “help us get this message across”.

EuroPCom

5th European Conference on Public Communication

Making the difference, fighting indifference



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

“The opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference”. It’s a famous quote by Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate, Elie Wiesel. Fighting indifference is one of the main challenges in view of the upcoming European elections. Europe’s impact on our daily life is steadily increasing and EU politics are daily front-page news, but nonetheless citizens have never felt that disconnected from the Brussels’ bubble. Eurobarometer stats on the people’s trust go red and the European elections in May are often overshadowed by local, regional or national ballots. The first election polls show not only a rise of eurosceptic or euro-critical parties, but – more worrying – an expected record low voter turn-out.

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Politicians face this indifference not only at the European level. In past decades the role of public authorities changed drastically, from a steering over a supporting towards a collaborative government. Along with this evolution, public communication was professionalised and citizens are now informed and involved more actively than ever. Sure, all this has led to some visible results, often at local level, in certain parts of Europe and focused on specific segments of society, but in general the gap between government and citizens remains huge. All this leads to questions and doubts among politicians and communicators, about the return on the communication investment or more fundamentally about the democratic basis on which public authorities operate.

On 15 and 16 October 2014, the EuroPCom conference will shed a light on this complex context at local, regional, national and European level. The 5th edition of the European Conference on Public Communication will gather about 700 communication professionals from all over Europe to debate, show best practice and set-up partnerships.

Several topics will be on the agenda. What are the communication lessons learnt from the European elections 2014? How to imag(in)e Europe and develop a new appealing story for the old continent? What are inspiring examples of public diplomacy and international reputation strategies? How can public communicators join forces with civil society, NGOs, private sector partners, etc?





EuroPCOM participants ask for platforms to interact and participate. Besides lectures and debates, the conference will offer several open workshops and conversation sessions. Participation will also be key in the preparation of the conference. The conference team invites all colleagues to send in their ideas, inspiring case studies and other suggestions, and their proposals for the second European Public Communication Award.

EuroPCOM is organised by the EU Committee of the Regions, in partnership with the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Presidency of the Council of the EU, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Club of Venice and other professional associations.



Practical in t

EuroPCOM 2014: 15-16 October 2014, Brussels

Programme proposals and candidates for the European Public Communication Award: deadline 31 May 2014

More information: www.cor.europa.eu/europcom

join the debate on **LinkedIn** (group "EuroPCOM") and

Twitter (#europcom / @europcom2014)

Latest news about the Club of Venice members

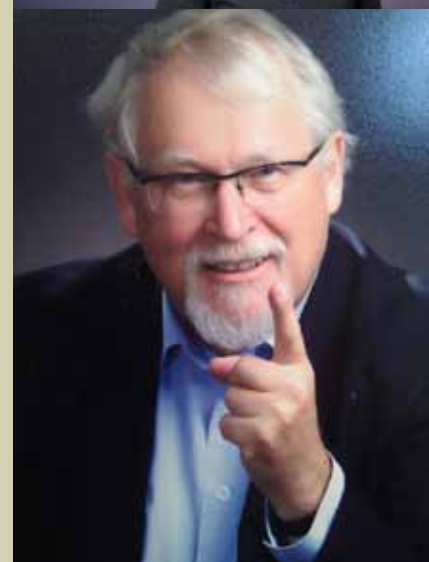


Steering Group Members

We are pleased to inform you of recent updates in the composition of the Steering Group of the Club:

- Last July Pierre-Emmanuel De Bauw, former Director-General for External Communication of the Belgian PM Chancellery, was appointed to serve the new King of Belgium as Director of Media and Communication for the Royal Palace
- In October 2013 Zvonimir Frka-Petešić, former Head of the Public Diplomacy Service in the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of Croatia, was appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Croatia in Morocco (first nomination as Head of an Embassy in his career)

The Club is very proud with such honourable achievements, which are in recognition of Pierre-Emmanuel's and Zvonimir's excellent profile and high professional and human qualities. Congratulations, dear friends!!!



A warm welcome to the new members of the steering group

- **Andreas Katsaniotis**, Secretary-General for Information and Communication, Greek Government
- **Laine Kucinska**, Deputy Head of the Communication Department, Latvia State Chancellery

Advisory Group Members

Niels J. Thøgersen, Vice President of the Club, is now president of the organisation "Europeans Throughout the World" which aims to connect and reinforce ties among all European expats in the world, with a view to the upcoming European elections and other future common challenges

The Club wishes him Good luck with this new initiative!



The Club of Venice organised a new Seminar on “Digital Communication Trends”

at the Info Point Europa, Brussels, rue Archimède 1 on 21 February 2014

This event was the 9th of this type organised by the Club of Venice on audiovisual, on line and interactive communication.

The seminar aimed, through the share of best practice and lesson learning, to explore ways and means to inspire governments and institutions in their transition and adaptation to innovative digital communication, by understanding better the new web reality and the instruments needed to shape their communication strategies.

Professionals from EU Member States, institutions and bodies, as well as external specialists, convened to share views and best practice on :

- the increasing impact of the new media on government and institutional communication strategies, notably on the implementation of the “webcare” principle and consequent adaptation of web platforms to offer better services and a more interactive approach with the public (this will also include open data/open gov latest news and related issues) (including a look into hub-oriented strategies)
- “citizens journalism”: how governmental/institutional authorities could capitalize from this growing phenomenon and its role in detecting, shaping and influencing public opinion: tackling it as a challenge for quality mainstream media? drawing inspiration as a blend between collaborative journalism and social responsibility and inclusiveness? (including the impact of strategic choices on the multi-tasking approach and other behavioural standards).

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Programme of the event

9.15 - 9.30	Introduction – Presentation of the key issues Opening statements: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome by Cristina Gallach, Head of the “Public Relations” Unit, DG Communication and Transparency, General Secretariat of the Council of the EU• Niels J. Thøgersen, Honorary Vice-President, Club of Venice• Erik den Hoedt, Director of the Public Information and Communication Office, Ministry of General Affairs, The Netherlands
9.30 - 12.30	Engaging in citizen-oriented web services; toward; an integrated approach Moderator: Thomas Fischer , Executive Director, Brussels Office, Bertelsmann Stiftung Panel: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milko Vlessing (Web Advisor for the NL Directorate for Public Information and Communication Office) and Theo Zijderveld (Advisor for the NL Ministry of the Interior): “Webcare” (overview of recent Dutch government best practice)• Sandra Bukovska, Latvia, Project Coordinator, Department of Presidency communication and Public Relations, Secretariat of the future Latvian Presidency of the Council: detecting skills through the social media (Presidency Internship Programme)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romain Lacombe, France, Head of Development and Innovation, Etalab: the inter-ministerial platform "http://data.gouv.fr" • Anthony Simon, United Kingdom, Head of Digital Communications Prime Minister's Office & Cabinet Office: a UK government perspective to open data, engaging with citizens, and social responsibility • Maria Phanti, Cyprus, Press Counsellor, Permanent Representation by the EU: engaging through social network in Nicosia and Brussels
12.30 - 13.50	Lunch Break
13.50 - 16.30	<p>Social Responsibility and inclusiveness: "Citizens journalism" Impact on mainstream media and public communication</p> <p>Moderator: Marjory Van den Broeke, European Parliament, Head of the Press Service</p> <p>Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giacomo Mazzone, international director in EBU: "trends in active democracy" (focus on the World Forum on Democracy in the Council of Europe held in Strasbourg on 27/29 November 2013) (http://www.coe.int/en/web/world-forum-democracy/home) (combination of web and TV to mobilise people) (tbc) • Vasilis Kouloulis, Director of eGovlab at Stockholm University, Chair of the Board of Directors of "Gov2U" " (http://www.gov2u.org/) (alliances with governments, public organisations and civil society): "safeguarding fundamental rights in the age of on-line democracy" • Michaël Malherbe, "Décrypter la communication européenne" (http://www.la-comeuropeenne.fr/) : campaigning on and across Europe while detecting citizens' expectations and scepticism • Laura Doward, The Guardian: initiative "Citizens' Witness" (https://witness.theguardian.com) • Mieke van Heeswijk, Director "Network Democracy": "Publeaks" (https://publeaks.nl)
16.30 - 16.45	<p>Future orientations and closing remarks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erik den Hoedt/Niel; J. Thøgersen

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Seminars/workshops organised by the Club of Venice on audiovisual and on line communication issues

* as of 24 February 2014*

Date and venue	Theme
21.2.2014 , Brussels, Info Point Europa	Digital Communication Trends
22.3.2013 , Brussels, Council premises (joint CoV/WPI)	Public communication in the evolving media landscape: adapt or resist?
4.10.2012 , Brussels, Council premises (joint CoV/WPI)	Open Government in the making
16.02.2012 , Brussels, Council premises (joint CoV/WPI)	The next web and its impact on government communication
7.10.2011 , Brussels, Council premises (joint CoV/WPI)	The impact of social media on journalism
20.10.2010 , Brussels, Residence Palace (w/Belgian Chancellery)	Capacity Building + Social Media + web 3.0
19.3.2010 , London, Central Office of Information (COI)	Web 2.0 - Digital strategies for public communication
17.4.2009 , Brussels, International Press Centre (w/Belgian Chancellery)	Interactive Web 2.0 communication
25.2.2008 , Brussels, EP premises	Audiovisual and interactive communication

Steering group and advisory group – new composition

CLUB OF VENICE – STEERING GROUP

DEN HOEDT Erik (NL)

Director, Public Information and Communication Office., Ministry of General Affairs

GAVRIELIDES Eleonora (CY)

Director, Press and Information Office, Ministry of Interior

HÖRR Claus (AT)

Director, Department 7/2, Press and Media Service, Bundeskanzleramt

KATSANIOTIS Andreas (EL)

Secretary-General for Information and Communication to the Greek Prime Minister and to the Minister of State

KÖHN Ulrich (DE) (acting)

Director of European Affairs, Press and information office, Federal Government

KUČINSKA Laine (LV)

Head of the Communication Department, State Chancellery

VILLA Anna Maria (IT)

Director/Coordinator, Office for European Citizenship, Internal Market and General Affairs,

Department of European Policies, Presidency of the Council of Ministers

LE VOCI Vincenzo (Council of the EU)

Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

Administrator, Public Relations (Information Policy), General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

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CLUB OF VENICE – ADVISORY GROUP

ROLANDO Stefano (IT)

Honorary President of the Club of Venice

Professor of Public Communication, IULM University, Milan,

President of the Brand Committee of the City of Milan,

Former Director of the Italian PM Information Service

BRUNMAYR Hans (AT)

Honorary Vice-President of the Club of Venice

Former Director-General, DG F - Press,

Communication and Protocol at the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

THØGERSEN Niels Jørgen (DK)

Honorary Vice-President of the Club of Venice,

Former Director-General at the European Commission DG Communication,

Communications Advisor

VAN DEN BERGHE Mieke (BE)

Honorary Vice-President of the Club of Venice

Former Director of the Belgian government Information Service

Lecturer/Consultant, Hogeschool Gent, postgraduate management & communication

GYARFAS FEKETE Judit (HU)

Honorary Vice-President of the Club of Venice, Communication Advisor

Former Deputy Director General, Department of Communications and Public Affairs,

Head of EU Communication Service, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

GRANATT Mike (UK)

Club of Venice Coordinator

Former Director of the UK Government Information Service

Visiting Professor, University of Westminster,

Senior Associate Fellow, Defence Academy of the UK

Partner, Luther Pendragon

Plenary meeting

Riga

Plenary meeting of the Club of Venice in Spring 2014

Riga, Latvia - 5/6 JUNE

Venue: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, K. Valdemara street 3

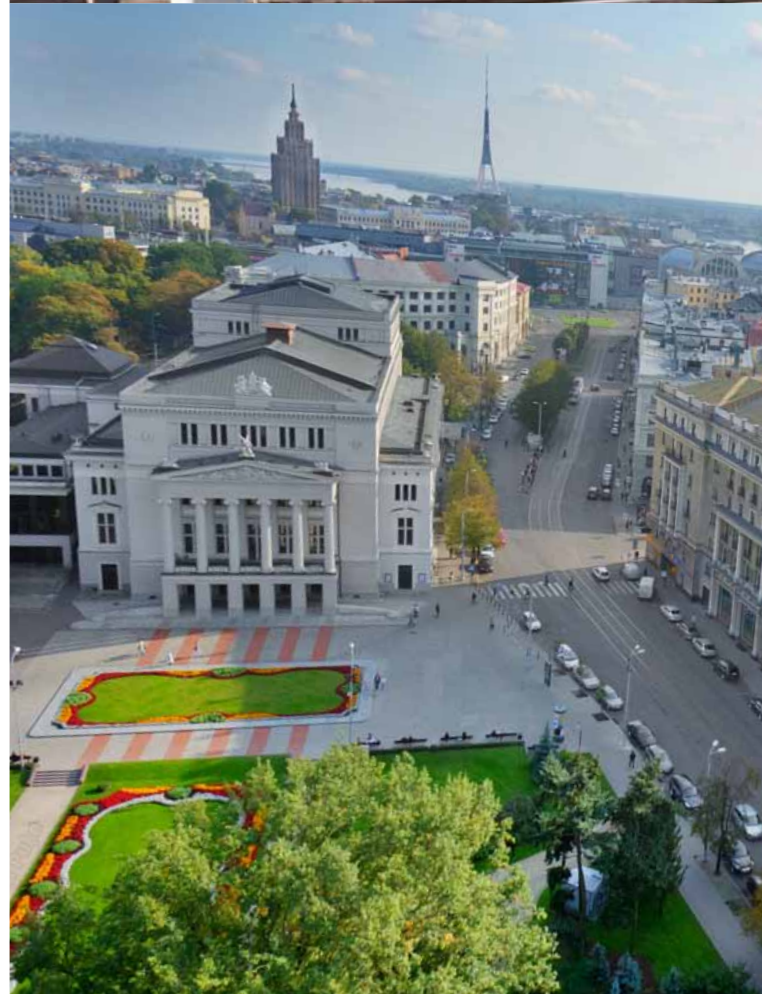
The plenary is expected to focus on:

- governmental communication strategies and organizational changes in progress (to meet upcoming strategic challenges and adapt organizational framework to the technological and operational innovations)
- public diplomacy in progress (with an overview of global trends, relevant national approaches and evolution in indexation survey and focus on "Strategic Communications")
- the communication challenges in the European agenda, in the aftermath of the May 2014 European Parliament elections (fresh feedback and initial orientations for future cooperation in information policy)

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Under strong impulse from the hosting Latvian authorities, particular attention will be drawn during the Club plenary to Strategic communications (StratCom), an instrument which is used by skilful communicators who think, act and care about challenges that every individual faces in the information age. "StratCom" helps states and governments to improve their communication with local populations and international audiences. For open democracies like Latvia, StratCom is rather a crucial necessity than fashion trend because, historically, Latvia has always been challenged in the political arena - and skilful StratCom appears a pure necessity.

To this end, considering its own requirements for expertise along with the challenges faced by its Western partners, Latvia has taken decision to establish NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence where constellation of subject matter expertise will be provided. The task of the StratCom Centre of Excellence is to think on communications in order to improve NATO and its partners' communication capability whether this is high political strategic level or single operator acting in field. The presence of national PD experts at Riga's plenary is therefore warmly encouraged. Invitations will be launched in April 2014.



PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

GOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES IN PROGRESS

- **INTRODUCTORY KEY-NOTE FROM A GOVERNMENTAL SPECIALIST**
 - Today's challenges for government communication
 - Riga European Capital of Culture 2004
 - The way to the Latvian presidency of the Council of the EU: building up the communication framework
- **GOVERNMENTAL TRENDS AND PLANS**
 - follow-up to Venice 2013
 - state of play (contributions from MS)

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IN PROGRESS: CHALLENGES AND BEST PRACTICE

- **KEY NOTE FROM AN EXTERNAL SPECIALIST**
 - NATO communication strategy : news from Latvia
- **PUBLIC DIPLOMACY EXPERIENCES**
 - EU-EEAS : five years after the Lisbon Treaty
 - MS PD' successful stories
- **FUTURE TRENDS AND COOPERATION (DISCUSSION)**

EUROPEAN COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

- Lessons learned from the 2014 European elections
- Ten-years enlargement : keeping the momentum and re-launching the European project
- Monitoring and evaluation in public communication

CONCLUSIVE SESSION

- Issues emerged and topics on the horizon: capacity building, public diplomacy, future cooperation and work in partnership
- Club planning 2014-2016 (plenaries, joint seminars, thematic meetings and workshops)

The Club expresses its gratitude to its members from Belgium, Greece, The Netherlands, Italy, Latvia, Austria, Slovenia, the Regional Cooperation Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions for their contributions.

Many thanks also to the pro-active support from the members of the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee of the Club, the Members Emeriti and our external collaborators.

This edition was made possible thanks to the collaboration of the Directorate-general for External Communication, Chancellery of the Prime Minister, in Belgium.

