

convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe



Focus on

After the European elections: delivering what and how – the role of public communicators

- Plenary meeting in Riga, 5-6 June 2014
- Government and institutional trends: transformative communication, training, on line communication
- Open policy making, in the open
- Who speaks on behalf of Europe?

Public Diplomacy and Branding

- Public diplomacy trends and soft power
- StratCom
- Polska brand and Riga 2014
- Latest developments in the "Arab Spring" zone



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Cette fois, ...

Philippe Caroyez et Vincenzo Le Voci

Pour ceux qui suivent les activités du Club de Venise, la rencontre en juin dernier à Riga, comptera parmi les plus enrichissantes. Comme toujours, nous mettons tout en œuvre pour faire écho à nos activités dans « Convergences » et nous avons tenté dans ce numéro de refléter la qualité et la diversité, si pas le nombre, des contributions qui y ont été faites et des échanges auxquels elles ont donné lieu.

Cette fois, ce devait être différent ...

Les actions de communication institutionnelle dans le cadre des élections européennes peuvent passer pour des cas d'école particulièrement intéressants : une occasion unique de mettre en place une stratégie et des actions transnationales, d'en suivre l'impact, de les décliner, de motiver l'adhésion des acteurs et relais nationaux, d'obtenir qu'ils se les approprient sur le plan national (ou régional), qu'ils les mettent en résonance avec leurs propres actions, ...

« Cette fois c'est différent »¹ nous disait-on, avec pour la première fois la possibilité « annoncée » de choisir les présidents et l'attractivité (supposée) de détenir chacun une « voix qui compte » dans le débat et qui pèse sur les décisions.² C'était aussi différent sur les plans de la stratégie globale (par phases et à moyen terme dès septembre 2013) et des moyens mis en œuvre (multilinguisme effectif, présence locale via les représentations, organisation de débats publics, recours massif aux médias sociaux et à la communication virale, spots tv et radio, affichage, mise à disposition d'un toolkit, création d'un « informations hub », publication des intentions de vote, débat des présidents, ...). Il s'agissait surtout de ne rien ménager dans un contexte difficile, de crise(s), de doute, d'euro-scepticisme, d'abstentionnisme prévisible, de possibles replis frileux et finalement d'une certaine mise en cause de la légitimité démocratique des institutions européennes.

Des intervenants n'ont pas manqué de souligner qu'il est singulier qu'un parlement doive ainsi faire tant d'efforts et de dépenses pour appeler à participer à sa propre élection, alors que cela devrait être le rôle des partis politiques.

Les résultats nous sont connus, ceux des taux de participation (et donc d'abstention) et des partis, doublés des attermolements pour la désignation des présidents. Ce sont les résultats du politique, comme les citoyens les ont décidés.

Dans son champ d'activités et sans la tentation d'en sortir, même si la communication n'est pas tout, la responsabilité des communicateurs publics, envers le politique et les citoyens, c'est d'analyser et d'évaluer sans a priori et sans complaisances d'aucune sorte les actions menées et leurs résultats ; c'est d'indiquer ce qu'ils distinguent et ce qu'ils proposent.

Il faudra bien sûr encore le recul nécessaire, mais ceux qui se sont exprimés assument la charge de cet indispensable examen et avancent déjà des pistes ; chacun s'accordant au moins sur la nécessité de ne pas attendre 2019 !

¹ "This time it is different" : premier axe de la stratégie de communication pour les élections européennes.

² "Choose who's in charge in Europe", "Act, React, Impact".



#STORYCHANGERS EU

Les propositions sont nombreuses et, comme chacune mérite l'analyse, même si elles ne sont pas toutes neuves, gageons que nous aurons l'occasion d'y revenir, en vrac : le « new narrative » pour l'Europe (dont à l'inverse de son prédécesseur le futur président de la Commission n'a dit mot jusqu'à présent), l'organisation du débat public et le recours aux médias sociaux dans ce cadre, principalement les forums, la « personnalisation » du lien à l'Europe (« ce que l'Europe fait pour moi, ce que je fais pour elle »), le retour aux partenariats de gestion avec les états-membres et les échanges de bonnes pratiques entre partenaires (que la nouvelle Commission pourrait reconsidérer), contribuer à la création d'une sphère publique européenne en soutenant des initiatives transnationales d'information et de presse et des réseaux transnationaux de citoyens et d'associations, dans le champ de la psychologie comportementale recourir aux techniques du « coup de pouce » (nudge) pour suggérer sans contraindre, informer et sensibiliser les enseignants et ce dès le plus jeune âge à l'école, ...

Plusieurs articles traitent de ces sujets.

Cette fois, c'est différent ...

Toujours dans le bouillonnement des idées, les réunions du Club de Venise sont heureusement l'occasion de confronter les expériences novatrices et les points de vue innovants, l'occasion d'apprendre des autres, d'échanger et d'élargir les horizons au contact des homologues, mais aussi de chercheurs et de professionnels du secteur privé ou associatif.

2 Si vous pensez que le **rôle de la communication** est désormais de faire naître la conversation, que la notion de « campagne de communication » est complètement dépassée, qu'il faut faire appel à tous les sens et qu'il n'est pas inutile de recourir à une certaine « simplicité brutale », tout en créant de la valeur, vous trouverez dans ce numéro de quoi nourrir votre réflexion.

Peut-être deviendrez-vous aussi un partisan de l'**Open Government**, en ouvrant le débat public aux groupes de citoyens, aux associations et en faisant même entrer les caméras dans la salle où le conseil des ministres prend ses décisions.

Mais, bien sûr, vous ne négligerez pas de toutefois en faire l'**évaluation**, à l'exemple de nos homologues britanniques qui nous est ici donné, et de veiller à la **formation** spécifique et continue des fonctionnaires chargés de la communication, comme aux Pays-Bas avec leur académie de la communication publique.

Dans les pages fort riches de cette sixième livraison, vous trouverez encore des contributions sur la **marque POLSKA**, le '**nation branding**' (focus sur la Hongrie) et la **diplomatie publique**, pour enfin aller jeter des **regards attentifs et intéressés par-dessus l'atlantique, la baltique et la méditerranée**.

This time, ...

For those who follow the activities of the Club of Venice, the meeting in Riga last June will surely count as one of the most enriching of its kind. As always, we strive to report our activities as comprehensively as possible in *Convergences*, and in this issue we have tried to reflect the quality and diversity, if not the number, of the contributions made to that meeting and the exchanges they have generated.

This time it was supposed to be different...

The institutional communication activities carried out in the context of European elections can be considered particularly interesting case studies – a unique opportunity to put in place transnational actions and strategies, monitor their impact, make those actions available on different supports, promote support and a sense of ownership among the national stakeholders and multipliers, encourage the latter to create synergies with their own actions at national (or regional) level, etc. 'This time it's different,' was the slogan, with – for the first time – the 'announced' possibility of electing presidents and the (purported) incentive of each having a 'voice that counts' in the debate, a voice capable of influencing decisions. It was also 'different' in terms of global strategy (a phased strategy with a medium-term perspective from September 2013 onwards) and the means deployed (genuine multilingualism, local presence through the representations, organisation of public debates, massive use of social media and viral communication, television and radio advertisements, posters, availability of a toolkit, creation of an information hub, publication of voting intentions, presidents' debate, etc.). Above all, the aim was to spare no effort at a difficult time marked by crisis (or crises), doubt, Euroscepticism, a predictably poor turnout, the possibility of cold feet and a fairly widespread tendency to question the democratic legitimacy of the European institutions.

Some participants did not fail to point out the remarkable fact that a parliament should need to make such efforts and incur such expense to urge people to take part in its own election, a task which properly belongs to political parties.

We now know the results, including the turnout data (and hence the abstention rate) and the results of the parties, and we have also seen the delays in appointing the presidents. These are the results of the political process, as decided by the voters.

As part of their task, and without wishing to exceed the scope of their powers (even though communication is not everything), public communicators have the responsibility, vis-à-vis

the body politic and citizens in general, to analyse and evaluate, without preconceptions and without any kind of complacency, the actions carried out and their results. They are called upon to report their observations and make proposals.

Of course, some more time and hindsight will be required, but those who have expressed their views and taken on the task of this indispensable analysis are already providing some valuable insights – and at least they are all agreed on the need not to wait for 2019!

Numerous proposals have been put forward and, given that they all merit analysis even though not all of them are new, we will surely have occasion to touch again on such issues as the 'new narrative' for Europe (about which, unlike his predecessor, the future president of the Commission has not said a word); organising the public debate and the use of social media – mainly forums – to this end; 'personalising' the link with Europe ('What Europe does for me and what I'm doing for Europe'); re-establishing the management partnerships with the Member States and the sharing of good practices between partners (a proposal which the new Commission might reconsider); how to contribute to the development of a European public sphere by supporting transnational information and press initiatives as well as transnational networks of citizens and associations; drawing on behavioural psychology and using 'nudge' techniques in order to suggest (but not force) a new outlook; informing and raising the awareness of teachers and students from an early age, etc. Several articles deal with these issues.

This time it's different...

Always awash with ideas, the meetings of the Club of Venice provide a happy opportunity to compare innovative experiences and viewpoints – the opportunity to learn from others, engage in discussion and expand our horizons through interaction with our counterparts as well as with researchers and professionals from the private and voluntary sectors.

If you believe that the **task of communication** today is to stimulate discussion, that the concept of 'communication campaign' is completely outmoded, that we must appeal to all senses and that it might be appropriate to make use of a certain 'brutal simplicity', while at the same time creating added value, you will find plenty of food for thought in this issue.

Maybe you will also become a proponent of **open government**, opening up public debate to civil society groups and associations and even allowing cameras into the room where the Council of Ministers takes decisions.

Of course, you will remember to perform a proper **evaluation** of these experiences, following the lead of our British counterparts, and will ensure that the officers responsible for communication receive specific further **training**, as they do in the Netherlands in the Public Communication School.

On the densely thought-provoking pages of this sixth issue you will also find contributions on the **POLSKA brand**, '**nation branding**' (focus on Hungary) and **public diplomacy**, and will also be able to enjoy an **attentive and interesting look at the Atlantic, Baltic and Mediterranean regions**.

¹ 'This time it's different': the primary focus of the communication strategy for the European elections.

² Choose who's in charge in Europe – Act, React, Impact.

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Riga's plenary meeting 5/6 June 2014

Research all possible synergies to develop true cooperation, Foster strategic and integrated communication, Promote capacity building

By Vincenzo Le Voci

The plenary meeting was hosted in the premises of Latvia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was attended by around 60 participants from 23 countries, the three main institutions, the two advisory committees, three Govt spokespersons (BG, LV, RO) and one Ambassador (I).

In its introductory speech, the Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Edgars Rinkūviņš highlighted the need to capitalize from the European elections' outturn and to pool efforts to seek coherent communication strategies, avoid the "blame game" and work to enhance the credibility of the EU process. He also stressed the need for synergies in the Presidency Trio's and enhancing cooperation with NGOs and civil society at large and recalled the Latvian semester's priorities (strengthening global and regional role of the EU, Eastern Partnership, focus on security and economy).

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Thursday 5th June morning session was devoted to the fresh analysis of the impact of the EP information campaign for the elections and on how to re-launch the debate on EU's identity and added value. In its key note, Mayte Peters (German specialist, Director of Publixsphere) underlined that the electoral deadline placed Europe back on the scene, though EU remains "unsaleable" and not interesting for journalists, except for coverage of scandalistic info. She also drew the audience's attention to the role played during the implementation of the communication strategy for the elections by new communication models and to the increasing need for more democratic space.

Steve Clark, EP Director of Citizens Actions, outlined the different phases of the communication campaign and provided fresh feedback on the wide variety of media channels and tools used during the strategy. He also observed that, once again, the political leaders' campaigns were filled with national issues.

France, Austria, Latvia and Sweden added feedback on the mobilisation of public authorities and civil society to raise awareness at decentralised level and to motivate youngsters.

Professor Anne Gregory (Univ. of Leeds, Director of "Global Alliances", who delivered a key-note on Friday 6th June) regretted that, as in many other circumstances, communication was not embedded since the beginning in the preparatory steps of the electoral exercise, and this generated once again a gap between planning, strategy, implementation and citizens' outreach.

The discussion that followed focused on the need to avoid fostering the European debate only incidentally (approaching to ad hoc events such as the elections), and to engage in a continuous exercise made of long-term "educational" campaigns, contrasting the "deficit of emotions"; connect values with the citizens; speak a "common language"; increase the sense of accountability; use surveys more effectively; and involve civil society more pro-actively.

Follow-up

In the light of the results of the European elections and the new mandate of the European Parliament and the European Commission, it appears evident that governments and institutions cannot succeed in revamping "Communicating Europe" without a concrete engagement from all the key players.

The future role of communicators is to research all possible synergies for future development of cooperation in order to recover citizens' trust and involve them as deeply and interactively as possible in the policy-making. An ideal blend of representative democracy and participatory democracy would help in particular national authorities build more concrete governmental communication strategies. And institutions should play an honest broker's role sharing more with national authorities as a real partner.

It was agreed to exchange further ideas in this domain by carrying out an internal reflection within the next few weeks, with a view to formulate proposals for cooperation, using as basis for reflection an updated version of the working paper circulated before the plenary (see attachment).

The Club will look forward to possible connections with the Council's WPI agenda (2nd semester 2014 and 1st semester 2015) and with a possible focus meeting in early spring 2015.



Follow-up

More study-cases and joint analysis on progress in strategic communication, public diplomacy and branding are foreseen at the next two plenary meetings in Rome (13-14 November 2014) and Vienna (11-12 June 2014).

Thursday 5th June afternoon session focused on communication strategies in times of political unrest and economic crisis. The key-note speaker (Zigurds Zaķis, Latvian communications strategist) delivered on "Communication in 2014 and beyond", reminding today's scenario where digital tools and platforms are fundamentally changing and highlighting the need to avoid fragmentation of the information. In his view, there is a need for professionalism, deep concern, stronger engagement and a coherent and concrete approach.

Public communicators should ignore anything that would not be interesting or valuable for the audiences and consider social networks through the approach "think platforms, not media". Every campaign must be considered as an "integrated campaign" (Strategy, architecture, Synergies, Consistence, Real time, Open ended...) and most efforts should be concentrated on making it clear and simple ("brutal simplicity"), relying on the communicator's/designer's credibility and ability as a master storyteller.

The debate was inspired by the three contributions provided by:

- Jānis Kārklīns, Director of the NATO Centre of Excellence for Strategic Communications (who focused on technological evolution and consequent dramatic change in the communication landscape; communication shift which requires adaptation in methodologies and thorough exchange of PD practices);
- Guy Dominy, associate trainer for civil service learning and former UK COI strategist, on how to evaluate information campaigns by demonstrating their impact and the value of communications, bearing in mind three main principles : a) performance framework must contain communications objectives that are aligned to the strategic priorities of the organisation and b) adequate mix of qualitative and quantitative evidence; c) performance measures should be within the communication directorate's sphere of influence; and
- Magdalena Kudlicka, Head of the EU Unit, Poland MFA Department of Public and Cultural Diplomacy, on "Communicating the Polska Brand".

5





The European elections 2014: lessons learned and future challenges

By Mayte Peters

Friday 6th session was devoted to the exchange of best practice and implementation of government communication plans. In its key-note, Professor Anne Gregory focused on the new programme “Inspire” of the UK Government Communication Service, which aims to prepare the future leaders of the Government Communication profession.

This initiative formally started in May 2014, when 37 carefully selected future leaders began a specifically designed two-year programme tailored to meet individual needs and underpinned by other important mechanisms such as regular reviews of progress, strong training schedule, move into roles across Government etc., with the ultimate objective to develop a ‘corporate resource’. It encompasses, among others, short placements in other Government departments and in external organisations, including in the private sector; an assigned mentor for help and guidance to each participant; coaching as required, and regular feedback on performance and leadership behaviour and a requirement to keep a learning log and updated development plan.

The session was led by Erik den Hoedt (Director of the Dutch Information and Communication Services) and his Head of the NL Government Communication Academy, Miriam Van Staden. The rich update provided by the Dutch colleagues focused on the government’s ongoing response to the survey carried out last year to identify citizens’ expectations and trends in govt communication, followed by a rich outline of the key activities of the Academy, which are based on tailor-made information, “doormat moments”, webcare, corporate identity approach (house style) and due attention to behavioural insights. Research & media analyses and inter-departmental communication are essential components of the global strategy.

The contributions provided by the hosting Latvian authorities focused on:

- Open Government communication, with Latvia on the front line;
- the information strategy to promote Riga2014 European Capital of Culture;
- a career and education on line platform for youngsters being used to recruit trainees for the future presidency and for future applications of this kind.

Finally,

- Christian Spahr from the Adenauer Foundation recalled the progress in public accountability and PR issues being made in the countries of Central and South-East Europe and the recent creation of a Ministry for Digital Infrastructure in Germany;
- Anthony Zacharzewski delivered on a subject closely connected with the Europe-wide open government trends, in particular on the open design process for NHS Citizen, a topic linked with open policymaking - a project on which the external platform “DemSoc” has been collaborating with the UK Cabinet Office.

Follow-up

- Open Government and Open policy-making: trends will be followed in the following plenaries and in a possible seminar to be organised in 2015 (topic also developed interinstitutionally in the formal agenda, having regard to the connections with Open Data).
- Training opportunities and professional development plans:
 - possibilities are being explored to offer slots to communication officials from other national administrations to follow the Academy’s courses;
 - the Club will facilitate further exchanges at trans-national level and foresees to have “Capacity Building”-related issues on the agenda of the next plenary in Rome.

The participants received copy of the new edition (n°5) of the Club review “Convergences”.

The meeting was followed by a very moving visit to the Corner House which hosted a 8.000 sqm KGB compound. This was a unique opportunity to appreciate how lucky we are in a world of freedom and how we should all share with the Baltic States’ citizens the pride for having overcome those dark ages.

With regard to the future plenary meetings, Austria and Netherlands have confirmed their engagement to host the spring plenary meetings respectively in 2015 and 2016 (AT will organise its plenary in the 20th year of EU membership, while NL will host it during its semester of Presidency of the Council of the EU), while the autumn plenaries will take place as usual in Italy (Rome on 13-14 November 2014 and Venice in 2015 and 2016).

Thank you very much for inviting me, I am very happy to be here today.

Now, before I begin, a short disclaimer at the beginning:

I’m German. However, I have spent most of my life living outside of Germany. While doing so, I was often-times confronted with a range of stereotypes against us: “when going to school in the UK, for instance, one of the most popular “greetings” was “Two World Wars and One World Cup”. When Bayern Munich played Manchester United in the infamous Champions League Finals in 1999, my friends found it so unsafe for me that they found it best I go into hiding.

Now obviously, I have many more positive experiences to tell from my time growing up abroad. All in all, it’s been a very happy life so far. The reason I’m starting with this anecdote, however, is that this is what happens when one focuses on national differences and stereotypes, even in my generation.

The funny thing is, I never really felt very German. But others attached expectations to my nationality, including Germans themselves. In Germany this entailed, amongst other things, a very particular understanding of politics that I should have. One shaped predominantly by institutions, political parties, and political talkshows. A world which I found not interesting in the slightest and completely irrelevant to my world.

For me, the Internet was key for being able to participate in political discourse in my home country. And here, the institutions and political parties took quite some time to enter my online world. There was a disconnect between my understanding of politics, which was always decidedly issues-based, and that of those I was called to vote for in federal elections. Publixphere, the non-partisan political discussion platform I represent here today, was the attempt to build a new political, non-partisan home. It is ultimately the attempt to contribute to a more networked and Europeanized political public sphere in Germany, and ultimately, one day, by way of a multilingual platform, in the European Union.

Now, let me begin my actual talk.

First, a quick re-cap of these past elections:

They were a **lost opportunity**:

- 1 We had a wide array of issues about which we could have mobilized in these elections, but didn’t
- 2 This was probably the most visible European election campaign to date. Of course, this still means that in my hometown of Hamburg I didn’t see much of a campaign going on at all. For many people, if they followed the elections, it took place elsewhere, and for lack of substantial media coverage, mainly online.
- 3 The rise of populist parties in all of the EU was duly noted by our political elites, yet the reaction was ultimately disappointing. Public political statements rarely went beyond “we need to defend the European project!” Period.
- 4 We have long ago moved beyond permissive consensus buy have yet to move beyond a discourse focused on being “for” or “against” the EU.
- 5 Sadly, in these elections, just like in the elections before, European electorates remained far below their participatory potential.

Of the many possible reasons for why these elections turned out the way they did, let me in this talk focus on the quality of public debate, and on the capability of the Europe as we know it to deal with changing notions of politics, with rising political disconcertion, and with a re-invention of European identity particularly amongst the younger generations of Europeans.

I will argue that

- 1 We need to **relaunch** the European debate, moving beyond “pro-EU” vs. “against EU”,
- 2 We need to do so by **networking** and using both online and offline tools and forums, towards a more differentiated public political dialogue around issues.
- 3 We should not be afraid of **politicizing** the European Union, and of harnessing an emerging European identity.

Dr. Mayte Peters is the Project Manager of the Network of Centers, based at the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet & Society in Berlin.

She leads a research project on «Citizenship in the European Union» at the Freie Universität Berlin, joined to a project (Publixphere) she initiated in 2011, which aims to promote political participation on- and offline and to foster the emergence of a European public sphere. Prior to moving to Berlin, she studied International Relations at the University of St. Gallen, where she also completed her doctoral thesis.

Parallel to writing her thesis, she set up and ran a photography gallery in Hamburg and worked for the European Capital of Culture 2010.



One

It's high time to **re-launch the European debate**. In the crisis years prior to these elections, we have fallen back into stereotypes and nationalist narratives – not just the so-called populists, but also the members of the pro-European political establishment. The blame game thrived and continued as the treaties were changed.

All the while, **“Europe” remained “the other”**.

What's so tragic about this situation is that in these past elections, eurosceptic populists were able to build on this long tradition of nationalist rhetoric. In times of record youth unemployment and a crisis in Ukraine, our political parties were seriously talking about cucumbers and light bulbs – albeit less today than 5 years ago. This is a scandal. What may be useful for reinforcing national identities, is detrimental to forging a strong European Union in which “unity lies within diversity”.

Political parties as well as the media failed to harness a public political discussion around concrete EU policy. What kind of consumer protection do I support if I vote green, conservative, or social democrat? What kind of agricultural policy or financial regulation? All in all, this was not an electoral campaign in which different pro-European parties really publicly argued for different political alternatives beyond basic and almost un-contestable claims such as “for a more just and wealthy Europe”.

As a result, even politically interested people were saying, “I don't know who to vote for because I don't even understand what's at stake”.

There is a wealth of citizens and organizations out there who are very much pro-European, but who might have different takes on how this Europe should look like. This dialogue needs space. What we have right now is a political vacuum. This needs to change.

Now, let me talk about political disconcertion. Right now, Citizens everywhere are increasingly disconcerted with politics, contesting traditional power structures, and staying away from the polls. In these elections more than ever before, populist eurosceptic actors were able to instrumentalize many citizens' very real fears: of job loss, of cultural and national identity loss.

As the **Economist** wrote at the beginning of the year: as varied as the positions of the Eurosceptic, anti-European populist parties in Europe are: “What they all have in

common is that they are populist and nationalist, that they have strong views on the EU, immigration and national sovereignty, and that as a result they are doing very well in the polls.”

This brings me back to the issue of identity. National identities in their political and constitutional spheres have long been complemented by a European component. State citizens are also union citizens. We have a European Parliament. National governments are represented in the Council. What is missing, however, is all too often the Europeanization of the democratic dimension of the nation states. What is also missing is the constructive politicization of cultural identities. And this is, I believe, a fundamental flaw in the way we are communicating politics in the European Union today.

Point two

Reach your relevant audiences by networking. The notion of politics is changing, and Europe's communicators need to catch up.

Why?

More and more citizens are using the Internet: to voice opinions, to look for alternative networks, methods and tools of political participation, and to organize around specific issues across borders. Now, you might say, this is not only a European issue: it's happening all over the world! Correct.

But in Europe, there is a supranational entity, the European Union, at which political concerns may, and should be directed. And this, I would argue, could be the European Union's as well as its member states' strength. But for this, the EU – not just Europe – must be politicized, democratized, and political public discourse transnationalized.

Already, citizens are using the EU **as a transnational democratic space**. We have seen that a networked **European public sphere is emerging around issues**, such as ACTA, the Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement, for instance. Online networking played a fundamental role in this debate. The combination of online and offline activities and communication was key. We are also currently seeing the emergence of an issue-based European public sphere around the Transatlantic Free Trade Agreement, or TTIP.

In both of these cases, mobilization entails a large transnational network consisting not only of elected politicians but also of civil society organizations, citizens, media, and interest groups that collaborate and coordinate across boundaries to organize public debate – transcending both geographic and linguistic boundaries.

Of course, one could argue that transnational mobilization of citizens is not always aimed at concrete policy outcomes. Maybe we just want to make some noise. We have seen citizens taking to the streets in protest against a rather abstract European order in Madrid, Athens, Paris, Berlin... you name it. We have also seen movements such as blockupy – “we are the 99%” – taking very real European issues – and fears – as a prompter for transnational resistance against political power structures in a way which some, like our president Joachim Gauck, for instance, might call rather destructive.

But these movements hold important lessons. The forums in which politics – or rather: political issues – are discussed have moved outside what we might call “traditional” forums of politics. The parliamentary plenary is no longer at the center of public political discourse. The center has moved, and changed into a network of actors, active both online and offline.

Now it is important to note, that political disconcertion is not the same as a lack of interest in politics as such. From personal experience, I can tell you that my own disconcertion with politics stemmed more from the contradictory nature of communication around the EU. Institutional and medial communication around Europe was, and is often not in synch. The justifications in short: Politicians saying “talking about Europe is no way to win elections”. Journalists saying “It doesn't sell”. Period. We obviously need other forums in which to talk about European politics.

On a positive note, the information needed for forming “more informed” opinions on the EU is easily available. Now, what does this mean for Europe's communicators? First of all, it means that the political institutions for whom you as communicators communicate are not necessarily addressees of citizens' political concerns anymore; instead, citizens are increasingly turning elsewhere. This also means that you as communicators have the difficult task of “getting your audience back”. I would argue that you can no longer do this alone. You need to open up, network and engage in public dialogue.

And here, it is important to note that the established media are not necessarily still the most prominent observers of the EU. They may no longer be the partners in crime that you are looking for. On the contrary: It's also a wealth of blogs, forums, networks, and political platforms, many of which may claim to be much more critical observers of the EU than many established media outlets – from the BBC to the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung.

I would also argue that what you need is intermediaries who are trusted by the audiences you are trying to reach.

With Publixphere, we try to be just that: a non-partisan intermediary. We are an online political information and discussion platform, our main target audience being politically interested, yet often-times disconcerted young citizens. But once we have identified the issues our users are most interested in, we actively reach out to established political actors: politicians, parties, NGO's, networks, ministries, you name it, and engage them in on- and offline dialogue with our users. We spent months building up trust, spending a lot of time convincing politically disconcerted young citizens at schools or universities that it's worth engaging in dialogue with political actors. We spend just as much time building a case to politicians or insti-

tutions that the Internet can be a space for substantial debate. It's a process of bridging cultural divides.

What I want to say by this is this: The EU's citizens, no matter how and where they engage, are not irrelevant. It's a vibrant political jungle out there; use it to network and communicate. Dare to open up.

Point three

Politicise. In order to revive the transnational democratic space that is the European Union – and this is what we need to desperately do – we, you, we need to work together.

The EU could be a space for participation. It should be an ever more important goal in light of these past elections to communicate the EU as a democratic space in which citizens have a voice that extends beyond only elections. In doing so, we should not shy away of harnessing the common experience of Europeans in the present and future; and take the emerging European identity forward into politicization.

For one, the EU is a space of institutionally upheld distinct, shared, values. We may struggle to uphold them again and again, but we must. Together. Using the institutions we have to uphold them.

The European Union is also a space of an emerging shared culture and identity, more than “just” a space of a shared cultural heritage. It is also one of a shared experience in the present and future. I would argue that this narrative is especially relevant for those young people who embody Europe's values.

For Europe's institutions and actors, this means daring to be vulnerable, and defending Europe as a political project. As contradictory as it sounds, but movements like blockupy, by appealing to a transnational, quasi horizontal shared identity of Europeans, have managed to better embody a European identity to many young Europeans than any political leader I can see.

For there to emerge a truly European transnational democratic space, we need to work towards more public European discourse both at the European and national levels. **Participate in this dialogue depending on your institutional ability to do so**. The European Parliament as an institution will not be able to communicate much more than “go vote”. But other actors can complement this picture. There are already so many good things about communicating Europe; but – assuming that we have communicators from different European and national institutions as well as governments here – you are boycotting each other's work. There is much to be gained by moving from communicating “the EU” to communicating issues. Putting aside self-promotional tendencies and communicating more strongly and openly around the issues that are at stake. We need to reach a place where it is no longer acceptable to fall back on “no elections to be won by talking about European issues”. Go “out there” and convince citizens, especially young citizens active online, to trust institutions again not by simply stating that they should, but by convincing through willingness to listen and meaningful contributions. A vivid civil society landscape, covering all corners of the political spectrum, is ready to complement these efforts.

Let's not waste more precious time to make this project work.

THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2014: LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE CHALLENGES

„on grounds for re-designing EU identity, re-launch the European project and share common values: the role of public communicators“

Mayte Peters | Club of Venice | June 6, 2014



change public debate

- 1. relaunch
- 2. network
- 3. politicize

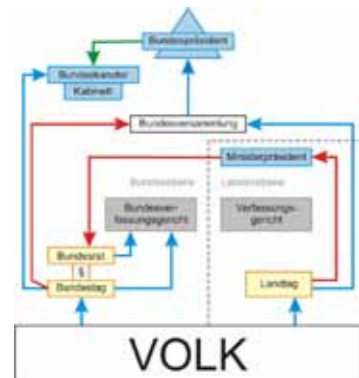


10



quality of public debate

- 1. relaunch
- 2. network



quality of public debate
 changing notions of politics
 rise in political disconcertion
 re-invention of European identity



11



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Treaty on European Union

Article 2
The Union is founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.

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changing public debate

- 1. relaunch
- 2. network
- 3. politicize

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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Ex-post : les élections européennes de 2014 en France

By Nicole Civatte



Nicole Civatte

Après avoir démarré sa carrière professionnelle dans une agence de communication publique puis au sein de deux groupes de presse professionnelle, Nicole Civatte a rejoint le Service d'Information du Gouvernement en 1991. Chargée de coordonner les campagnes de communication des ministères, elle a également conduit des projets visant à optimiser cette communication, et les moyens qui lui sont dédiés, avec par exemple la création d'un identifiant fédérateur de la communication gouvernementale et la mise en place de la mutualisation de l'achat d'espace de toutes les campagnes ministérielles.

Les élections européennes en France

Club de Venise
Riga – 5 juin 2014

Une très forte progression des anti européens

Parti	2009 (%)	2014 (%)
FN	6,3%	25%
UMP	20,8%	27,8%
PS	14%	16,5%
LGH-MoDem	9,9%	8,4%
ERLV	8,9%	16,3%
EgD	7,7%	6%
NPA	0,3%	5%
Autres partis	13,4%	13,7%

- Un record historique pour le Front National : 25% contre 6,3% en 2009
- Un des plus mauvais scores de la droite modérée et le plus bas score de la gauche depuis 1969

Une campagne d'incitation au vote

- Pour interpeller et faire prendre conscience de l'impact du vote en faisant écho aux perceptions des Français sur l'Europe
- S'appuyant sur
 - Une campagne radio et web
 - Renvoyant vers un espace digital d'information Ouijevote.eu

Spot radio
L'Europe, certains la voient utile; on peut aussi penser qu'elle pourrait être plus utile. D'autres trouvent qu'elle se mêle trop de notre vie ou alors pas assez, qu'elle n'en fait pas assez ou alors trop. Bref, on a tous notre mot à dire sur l'Europe. Parce que c'est notre Europe.
Choisir son député c'est choisir son Europe.
Les élections européennes c'est le 25 mai et c'est un seul tour.
Pour en savoir plus, rendez-vous sur ouijevote.eu

Les principales motivations du vote

- L'immigration : un enjeu désormais prioritaire**
 - Un thème important pour 31% à 40% des électeurs, contre 14% en 2009
 - Le premier motif de vote pour 64% à 88% des électeurs FN, devant l'insécurité et loin devant le chômage (24% à 48%) ou le pouvoir d'achat (32% à 44%)
 - Un des sujets désormais le plus important chez les électeurs UMP (42% à 57% contre 14% en 2009) mais marginal chez les électeurs de gauche, plus préoccupés par les sujets économiques et sociaux
- La situation économique : un thème logique compte tenu de la crise**
 - Une préoccupation plus forte chez les électeurs de gauche, et notamment le chômage pour 40% à 50% d'entre eux
- La volonté de sanctionner l'exécutif : un motif non majoritaire mais en progression par rapport à mars 2014 et 2009**
 - Près de 50% des électeurs disent qu'ils n'ont pas été influencés par leur opinion vis-à-vis du Président et du Gouvernement
 - 33% à 38% déclarent cependant avoir voulu sanctionner l'exécutif, contre 23% à 30% en 2009

Une abstention moins élevée que prévu

Année	Abstention (%)
1999	51,2%
2004	37,2%
2009	55,4%
2014	37,3%

- Une abstention de 57,9%
 - Equivalente à 2004
 - Inférieure à 2009
 - Supérieure à 1999
- Classiquement plus forte
 - Chez les jeunes (près de 75%)
 - Et les catégories populaires : 70% chez les foyers aux revenus modestes, 65% chez les ouvriers, 60% chez les non diplômés
- Motivée par
 - Un désintérêt pour le scrutin (31% à 36% des citations)
 - Le mécontentement vis-à-vis des hommes politiques (26% à 38%)
 - L'absence d'impact des élections sur la situation des électeurs (23% à 32%)

→ Il n'y a pas de rejet de l'Union européenne (17% à 27% des citations) chez les abstentionnistes

Quels enseignements pour la communication ?

- Une contrainte forte pour la communication publicitaire gouvernementale**
 - Le seul message possible : inciter à voter
 - Elle ne peut favoriser aucun parti politique, ni intervenir dans les thèmes du débat, et ne peut pas se substituer à la campagne politique
- Un résultat inégal**
 - Un dispositif de communication important pour les municipales → une progression de l'abstention
 - Un dispositif plus réduit pour les européennes → un recul de l'abstention
- Une confirmation des limites de la communication qui peut**
 - Rappeler la date, le fait qu'il n'y a qu'un seul tour
 - Informé sur les nouveautés, les modalités du vote par procuration
 - Faire prendre conscience de l'enjeu du vote
 - Faire se déplacer des potentiels abstentionnistes

→ La nécessité d'utiliser d'autres leviers, comme pour les autres sujets de l'action et de la communication publiques

Le Nudge (coup de pouce)

- Une méthode issue de l'économie comportementale (*Behavioral Economics*)
- Une distorsion entre le comportement supposé et le comportement réel, en raison de biais cognitifs et émotionnels qui influencent les choix
- Les états émotionnels, le rapport au temps, les normes sociales, l'environnement ... jouent un rôle important dans la prise de décision
- Un levier d'intervention pour les politiques publiques
 - Le nudge : orienter le comportement vers l'objectif souhaité grâce à une architecture de choix adaptée tout en laissant les individus libres de leur choix. Le principe : suggérer sans contraindre
 - Différentes typologies de nudge : la norme sociale (valoriser un usage via un chiffre emblématique), la réassurance (garantir une information par un symbole fort), ...
 - Complémentaire ou substituable à d'autres modes d'intervention que sont l'obligation (la loi), le coût (ex : la fiscalité, le prix), la sanction ...

Une expérimentation pour les municipales

- Donner aux électeurs une information (*nudge*) simple et spécifique, susceptible de les toucher, et donc de les influencer en leur donnant envie d'aller voter
- Un test auprès de 3 500 personnes réparties en 7 groupes : 6 groupes ont reçu un message par SMS ou courrier avant le 1^{er} tour, 1 groupe témoin n'a rien reçu
- Une enquête en ligne auprès des 7 groupes après le 1^{er} tour du scrutin

Message	Impact	Canal
Norme sociale : xx% des électeurs de votre ville ont voté à la dernière élection.	+	Courrier, SMS
Aversion à la perte : Le maire que vous souhaitez peut perdre si vous ne votez pas.	+	Courrier, SMS
Effet Hawthorne : Pour avoir votre avis sur l'organisation du vote, nous sommes susceptibles de vous contacter après les élections.	+	Courrier, SMS

Un effet positif : l'alerte

Message	Impact (%)	Signification
Norme sociale courrier	64%	
Norme sociale SMS	63%	
Aversion à la perte courrier	65%	Ecart significatif
Aversion à la perte SMS	71%	Ecart significatif
Effet Hawthorne courrier	67%	Ecart significatif
Effet Hawthorne SMS	58%	

Le nudge : une expérimentation à poursuivre

- Un projet à adapter pour les élections européennes, non réalisable par un émetteur comme le Gouvernement : « si vous ne voulez pas que les anti européens dirigent l'Europe, votez » ; « si vous ne voulez pas que votre candidat soit battu par un candidat de l'extrême droit, votez »
- Une expérimentation en cours dans le cadre de la modernisation de l'action publique : inciter à la déclaration en ligne des revenus
- Une poursuite de la réflexion pour la communication gouvernementale en France
- Des pratiques déjà en place dans des gouvernements étrangers (USA, Grande Bretagne) : des *nudge unit*

Sweden and the European Parliament elections: Increasing the participation of young people

By Vendela Engblom

Sweden has historically had a very high turnout in the general elections, usually landing above 80%, but the turnout in the European Parliament elections has been noticeably lower, hovering around 40%. Moreover, young voters and citizens born outside of Sweden are less likely to vote, and there are several marked geographical discrepancies. The efforts to increase their turnout in the 2014 European Parliament elections in Sweden offers several indications regarding the accessibility of European democracy and the need to continue the discussion between the elections. There was an encouraging increase in voter turnout from 45.53% in 2009 to 51.07% in 2014, but the reports for the turnout amongst disadvantaged groups are not yet available.

With 2014 poised to become a “super election year”, with elections to the European parliament, the Swedish parliament, the municipalities and the regional authorities happening in a matter of months, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society received several mandates to increase the voter turnout among groups that vote to a lesser extent than the general population. The focus was primarily on young people, whose turnout in the 2004 European Parliament elections, for example, was under 27%, as compared to 37.9% in the general population. These mandates to increase voter turnout included but were not limited to grants to civil society organisations and municipalities, school elections, and a Management Partnership effort with a clear focus on young voters. While the specific results of most of these efforts are not yet available, the common tendencies point to a need for accessible information regarding European Union politics as well as a focus on accountability.

Grants to projects aiming to increase voter turnout

The Swedish government tasked the National Board for Youth Affairs with distributing funding to civil society organisations to finance activities aimed at increasing voter turnout among young people, foreign-born persons and people living in areas where the voter turnout tends to be low. Municipal councils, youth organisations and other civil society stakeholders were invited to apply for grants. A little over 730 000 EUR was distributed and 22 projects were funded, which only represented about 9 percent of the 242 applications that were submitted.

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the applications; first, that they demonstrate a profound need for a discussion about democracy and awareness-raising around how democracy and politics. Second, the applications point to the need of founding a discussion of EU elections (and, in fact, all elections) in local circumstances and politics. The applications tended to address one or more of the following four reasons for not voting:

- A lack of knowledge regarding how political decisions affect society and the individual.
- A lack of understanding regarding how the individual citizen can affect society.
- A lack of engagement and participation in the political process.
- A lack of knowledge about the practical process, such as where one votes and how it works.

Jointly, these tendencies and the way they are addressed in the applications demonstrate a need for a deeper discussion of democracy, one that is locally driven and grass roots-focused. This becomes particularly important when it comes to young people and European Union-related issues, where a lack of knowledge or interest in the institutions involved is often expressed as a reason for not participating in the political process (Flash Eurobarometer 375 2009).

Vendela Engblom is a communications officer at the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society. She is responsible for the long-term communications strategy and the practical communications work regarding the agency's European Union work and its other international missions. She is also in charge of the Swedish Eurodesk Network, dedicated to information about the free movement of young people in the EU.

Previous to her work at the agency, she did a Master's Degree in Translation Studies with a focus in European Union translation at Stockholm University. She also received a Kofi Annan scholarship to obtain a Bachelor's Degree in English at Macalester College in the United States. Macalester is known for its focus on international policy, and her time at the university sparked her interest in communications as an essential key player in international issues.



School elections to increase familiarity with the process

A central effort in 2014 to increase knowledge of the practical process of voting in the European Parliament elections were the school elections, funded by the Ministry of Justice in Sweden. School elections are “shadow” elections or mock elections, organised as an exercise in democracy for all institutions of higher education and upper-secondary schools. As in the real elections (taking place concurrently) students and pupils “vote” for existing political parties.

The school elections are arranged by the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society in cooperation with the National Agency for Education, the Election Authority and youth and student organisations. They have been supported since 1998 for the general elections, but this was the first year they were held in conjunction with the European Parliament elections. This presented several new challenges and areas in which the schools need support.

Swedish schools are tasked with teaching their pupils about the fundamental democratic values, and as such are offered the opportunity to take part in school elections and use them as a springboard for a broader discussion about the democratic process among their students. The aim when expanding the school elections to also cover the European Parliament elections was to encourage first-time voters and young people to vote in the election to the EP, and to enhance their interest in and knowledge of the various ways in which young EU citizens can take part in and influence EU policies.

A crucial aspect of the school elections are that they not be held in isolation; accordingly, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society and the youth organisations that were carrying out the practical process produced supportive materials and tools that the schools could use. Many schools held “Democracy Days” and debates in conjunction with the elections. The results were by and large encouraging. Through over 200 schools that signed up to be part of the process, over 100 000 students had the opportunity to participate in the elections, and the media coverage was much greater than that of the 2010 school elections. In 2010, when the school elections were held in conjunction with the national elections, over 230 000 students had the opportunity to vote and over 1300 schools were signed up, but several factors make this comparison less significant than it seems.

Given that it was the first time this initiative was carried out, that there is another election coming up in the fall that caused some schools to opt out of this one, and that the European Parliament elections occur at a time in the year when the schools are occupied with final exams, the numbers are promising.

The major problems that arose mostly stemmed from protests related to the party debates that were held in some schools, which again point to the need for a continued discussion of democracy and related issues in non-election years.

A new Management Partnership focus on the youth vote

Furthering the focus on the youth vote was the new direction chosen for the Management Partnership in 2014. Under the umbrella theme of “Your opportunities and rights in the EU”, the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society carried out several activities aimed at young people and those who work with young people or democracy.

The purpose of these activities was to support information efforts that focused on European Union politics and the policy areas of the European Parliament. This focus was chosen because it was thought to be a more likely incitement to vote than a focus on European Union institutions and structures, which is sometimes the focus of EU-related information efforts.

The aim of the activities was twofold: information and activities directed at people who work with young people and democracy, as a knowledge of local politics and circumstances is necessary to demonstrate the connections between the EU and local policy; and information and activities aimed at young people directly, primarily in digital arenas.

Two examples of activities offer interesting insights: the one-day training course called Raise Your Voice 2014 and the digital tool MyVote2014.eu. The training course was held in five cities in Sweden that have experienced low voter turnout among young people and focused on methods for discussing democracy and European Union politics with young people. It gathered around 300 public employees, decision makers and organisations who work with young people and/or democracy.

The broad target group was chosen in order to let the training course serve a dual purpose as a local networking platform for election activities, an approach which led to several follow-up activities organised amongst the local organisations themselves.

Another notable result was the inspirational quality of the training, highly rated in the evaluations, which again suggests the value of putting local organisations together and letting them inspire each other. Among the important issues raised during the trainings were the accountability of politicians; the complexity of the European Union and the related difficulty of discussing it with young people; the accessibility of democracy and particularly European Union issues.

Regarding accessibility, a particularly successful venture of the Agency's was the cooperation with VoteWatch Europe regarding a Swedish version of MyVote2014.eu, a website and an app for smartphones and iPads. Over 34 000 Swedes took the quiz of 15 questions based on 15 votes in the parliament on issues regarding everything from nuclear power to parental leave, and the quiz was used by projects and organisations who were informing youth and other first time voters on the election. Over two thirds of those Swedes were under the age of 35 and the feedback was often very positive.

There were certain important factors contributing to the success of this tool: working with VoteWatch Europe was key, considering their knowledge and established credibility in this area; carrying a plain language revision of the Swedish translation with an expert organisation in the plain language field; and disseminating it to organisations and municipalities working to increase the youth vote, which provided a platform for what was in effect an entirely new website without links to established media. Lastly, the early launch in mid-January enabled us to take up media space not often offered to a website launch, as most of the EU-related information campaigns did not begin until late March or even April.

Insights

While many of these initiatives have not been evaluated yet, they provide several potential keys to success when informing on election issues in general and European Parliament elections in particular. Most importantly, it is clear that election years cannot be the only time that young people are informed about European Union issues. These initiatives were all launched in 2013 or 2014 and all of them would have benefited from a more long-term anchoring of European Union issues and election issues in the years between the elections.

In order for young people to understand the place of the EU in their reality, the information and the discussion has to be continuous, and the work to make the decision-making process of the EU comprehensible and accessible must continue. Moreover, a focus on policy issues has proven to awaken more interest and understanding than a focus on the structure of the European Union. Lastly, there most likely is not one single key to increasing the youth turnout, but the central factor is clear: young Swedish people who do go vote in European Parliament elections tend to do so because they find European issues and European Parliament elections important, they believe that they can affect policy by voting, and they think the elections concern issues they care about. The work done to increase the youth vote should thus aim at making this true for a larger part of the youth population.

Developing professionalism: Dutch Government communication trends and the impulse from the Government Communications Academy

By Miriam van Staden and Erik den Hoedt



Ministerie van Algemene Zaken

Ambitions for a Communicative Government

Club of Venice

Miriam van Staden

Riga, 6 June 2014



Miriam van Staden is senior advisor at the Dutch Academy of Government Communication. Trained as a linguist with a PhD in Papuan languages, she now tries to bring people and knowledge together in the field of government communication.

She organises 'masterclasses' for the directors of the communication departments, and has set up a course on leadership for managers. The fields she is currently working on are: competences for communication professionals and internal communication (in times of change).

Ministerie van Algemene Zaken

The task

- 7 'academians'
- 100,000 civil servants
- Great ambitions

23 May 2014

Government communication annual programme

1. Supportive civil service
2. Clear cabinet
3. Communicative organisation

3 voettekst

1. Supportive civil service

- Tailor-made information
- "Doormat moments"
- Webcare
- Corporate identity (house style)
- Behavioural insights

4 voettekst

2. Clear cabinet

- Research & media analyses
- Interdepartmental communication

5 voettekst

3. Communicative organisation

- The professional
- Organisation of communication
- Development of the profession
- Employee engagement
- Policy in networks

6 voettekst

1. Working for professionals

7 Ambitions for a Communicative Government
23 May 2014

2. Working with experts

8 voettekst

3. Working in networks

9 voettekst

Case: human behaviour

10

Case: human behaviour

11

Case: human behaviour

12

Case: human behaviour

13

Case: human behaviour

The academy and the annual programme

We investigate
We advise
We help implement

The academy and the annual programme

We investigate
We advise
We help implement

Ministerie van Algemene Zaken

23 May 2014



Erik den Hoedt (1959) studied Human Geography at the University of Groningen. Since 1984 he has worked for the Dutch Central Government in several management functions in the fields of statistics, internal organization and the last ten years in government communication.

In his present function as director of the Dutch Public Information and Communication Office, he and his staff are responsible for communication between the central government and citizens, internal communication within the central government, training programmes, communication research and the procurement of communication services. He is a fervent supporter of the goals and ideals of the Club of Venice and proud to be one of the members of the Steering Committee.

Communication in 2014 and beyond: some obvious shifts leading to inevitable change

By Zigurds Zaķis

We are living in a time when digital tools and platforms are changing societies, media, culture, creativity, storytelling, politics, economy, work and almost every other aspect of our lives. These are not just incremental developments, the ways we do things – gather information, learn, form our opinions, compete, organize communities, run countries and create value for our citizens – are starting to change fundamentally.

In the last decades of the Mass-media Age, the role of communication professionals (us) was mostly reduced to creating and delivering messages and stories to “target audiences” (them). The approaches that worked (or seemed to work) in the Mass-media Age – press releases, one-directional “media plans”, “information campaigns”, all based on pushing content towards people in a way only mass media allows – are losing efficacy and most probably will become niche approaches for particular situations.

The dynamics of the situation call for a set of new or significantly updated competencies from all communication professionals and demand completely new capabilities from all communication organizations, units and agencies, both internal and external.

Four obvious shifts to address

There are a few, very simple, obvious shifts in media, culture and communication that are changing the very nature of our work and also the way we should approach the communication of our governments.

First: from the dominance of one-directional communication, from the “saying things to them” approaches of the Mass-media Age, **we are moving back to an Age of Conversation.**

We are provided with tools and platforms that allow people to communicate directly with other people inside the groups they choose to be part of and with people they trust. But nobody is entitled to say anything to ‘them’ unless they have earned the right to be part of the group.

Creating, running and maintaining conversations, and taking part in existing ones requires a different set of competencies and skills. New approaches must be used to plan open-ended campaigns, to dynamically react to ever-changing developments and to balance campaigns with ongoing, continuous communication. Listening to conversations and identifying what's important in people's lives and what are their challenges could sometimes be more important than saying anything,

because we can only be part of these conversations by building relationships, adding value to them and creating extraordinary experiences.

Mass media will not disappear, it is becoming less and less “mass” and less and less “media” for “telling things to people” and its role is changing. Communication is returning to its roots – and so should we.

Second: we all are facing an over-abundance of information. Over the last few decades, information has become one of the biggest pollutants in our lives. Let's admit it – people do not need more information. Therefore, the primary job of communication professionals is to simplify. Then we have to add some emotional and aesthetic layers so that our narrative has a better chance to get through the noise and to influence our audience. But simplicity is the key.

I would actually argue that calling a campaign an “information campaign” in most cases is a sign of incompetence (or of a totally uncritical attitude to one's work) either on the part of the communication “professionals” or the people responsible for the result and strategy. Yes, it is bureaucratically safe, but it rarely delivers results.

“EU information campaigns” (or campaigns that, in order to meet all the bureaucratic requirements, are becoming bland and boring, and therefore totally ineffective) often are among worst examples. In most cases, they neither change what people think and do, nor create a stronger emotional link with their audience.

In a time when information has become a commodity and anyone can find whatever information they need in a matter of seconds, public communication campaigns are an inefficient way of delivering information, particularly if people have no actual interest in the subject. And generally, audiences ignore anything that is not interesting or valuable or relevant to their particular situation. Even worse, they will have an antagonistic attitude to any superfluous information.

There should be information-delivering infrastructure behind every campaign, providing opportunities for any person interested in the topic to dig deeper and find out more of relevance to them. But campaigns should be used for what they do best – dramatizing issues or exaggerating consequences, good or bad, in order to create interest or polarize audiences into starting conversations. Or just telling stories that change attitudes and lead to changes in behaviour. Purely information-based or hyper-rational approaches rarely do.

Third: “social platforms”, not “social media”. We are social beings and social networks have been a part of our lives for eons; digital technologies exponentially increase their visibility, reach, speed of communication and efficiency, and allow new ones to be easily created and managed for any purpose.

I believe it is a mistake to call social networks “social media”. They are not just another set of “media channels” that allow us “reach people” and “deliver messages and information” to them.

Try to think of social networks as “social platforms” and approach them as such, and your job will become more interesting and I would suggest, easier. We can use social networks as platforms for listening, for igniting conversations about issues that are important to people or for helping people and groups to organize themselves to achieve particular goals and improve their lives. We can ask people to participate in improving our services and, if the issues are important to them, they will. But it is very hard to “deliver messages” that are different from what we are doing in social platforms.

In my experience, effective utilisation starts with one very simple change— eliminating the phrase “social media” from our professional vocabulary and replacing it with “social platforms”.

And finally, video and interactivity are changing the ways we learn, communicate, tell stories and create value for people. Video, animation, interactive charts, dynamic data visualizations and other visual-storytelling tools are underused as a primary means of spreading our stories in place of ineffective press releases, textual statements and speeches to camera.

But no longer is it just about recording a “video version of a press release” – the over-abundance of information also applies to video content and nobody is interested in just another recorded lecture or “talking head”. At its best, video – professionally made in all aspects – helps tell the story in a compelling way, saves the audience’s time, not wasting even a second, and uses a variety of techniques to engage the viewer not only on a rational, but also on an emotional level.

Combined with interactive options, video delivers rich, visual storytelling in a variety of formats and provides every viewer with an opportunity find their own unique way to navigate the story, to choose the depth and breadth of information and experience they require to form their own opinion.

Five principles

How do you plan a campaign in this day and age? There are many formulas and every professional should really develop their own. I will share five principles I try to follow and am attempting to convince my clients to adopt.

- 1) Every campaign, big or small, should, at this time, be treated as an integrated campaign. Every great integrated campaign starts with a well thought-through strategy – from critically defining the role of communication and finding the insight to build on when briefing and inspiring the creative team and orchestrating all the activities. Smart strategy is the key to great creative work and to the integration of all the elements in an effective campaign.
- 2) Brutal simplicity. In a time of over-abundance of information and total channel fragmentation, our job is to simplify and to create experiences. Great, effective campaigns are typically based on great customer insight, so that their central idea can be both told in 140 characters and developed into in-depth case studies. If you cannot express the idea or your strategy in 140 characters, it is more than likely that the idea is not yet good enough.
- 3) The story, not information, is central. If communication is returning to its roots, we have to become even better storytellers, crafting stories that are relevant and compelling to our audience, consistent over time and adaptable to all contexts.
- 4) Utilise all the senses. This is mandatory, not an option. Pictures speak louder than words, so a story told in a visually attractive way will, in most cases, be more effective than just a written story. But if people can play with our story to experience different scenarios and to look at it from different, sometimes unexpected angles by themselves using interactive options, the impact will be much deeper and broader. Again, the main thing is to remember is that we are in the business of creating experiences, not just providing more information to people.
- 5) Creating value is at the centre of everything we do. This means always starting with the questions “how can we make people’s lives better and simpler?” and “how can we make our societies and countries more effective in serving the needs of our people?”, not with “what do we want to say them?”. This is an imperative in our time and a most intuitive rule. Our work should always start with conversations and digging beyond understanding what is important to our audience. When we do things that are important to them, communication is easy. Then it is just a matter of not forgetting to tell stories about what we are doing, but also about why we are doing it.

Communication Professionals Today and Tomorrow

Communication has always played a fundamental role in creating value for people, in strengthening societies and groups, in motivating organizations and countries to achieve more. In the emerging era of networked economies and connected societies, when communication tools are available to everybody and the importance of communication will grow significantly everywhere, the value of professional, strategically thought-through and creative communication will grow exponentially.

The world of professional communications is changing and we have to change with it. All of us – from the most experienced professionals to narrowly focused specialists – have to continually update our knowledge and skills, our views on what works and what does not, to keep up with the times. Pro-active, personal professional growth should be a mandatory requirement for anybody who wants to be a contributor to a contemporary communication team.

A new breed of communication professionals – from experienced communication strategists and creatives to user-experience experts and multidisciplinary project managers – will be needed to create and maintain efficient communication in the contemporary world of dynamic, open-ended campaigns and decentralized storytelling. We have to learn to co-operate and to build alliances, to brief and inspire our partners to great work, to evaluate their work for the best possible result and to manage co-operation with many ambitious partners.

But most importantly – we have to aim for excellence in every piece of communication, to create extraordinary experiences and extraordinary value for our audiences. Because if we lose that “something extra”, all that is left is just the “ordinary”. And our audience is no longer prepared to accept the ordinary from anybody.



Social networks: think **platforms**, not media

Platforms for

- listening
- getting know more
- conversations
- cooperation
- sharing
- solving
- entertaining*
- telling stories*
- informing*

building relationships
creating value
organizing groups

5. Mobility

Their mobility, no just mobile phone

For us: **Delivering 4W:**

- What they want
- When they want
- Where they want
- How they Want

+

For them:

Powerful Communication Tool

June, 2007

2

Brutal Simplicity

The essence of great campaign is to sacrifice. Our job is to simplify

11 A WORD
21 A PHRASE
31 A SENTENCE
41 A PARAGRAPH
51 A SPEECH
61 A BOOK

IF YOU CAN GET ALL OF THEM FLOWING DOWN
YOU HAVE PROPER STRATEGY

© National Geographic
Illustration: Philip Brown / Shutterstock

140 characters vs. a speech
A system of ideas



Zigurd Zaķis
Communication strategist, branding and marketing communication practitioner with more than 20 years experience in creative industries. He has been co-founder and Strategic Planning Director of two creative companies - advertising agencies Baltia Communication (1994-2001) and DOMINO BBDO (2001-2010), Strategic Planning and Digital Director in one of the leading Russian ad agencies Instinct (BBDO Russia Group, 2010-2011). Co-founder of design and branding company IGLOO (from 2004).

For last two years has his own practice helping both clients and selected agencies with planning integrated campaigns, communication-based marketing efforts and different aspects of Communication Strategy and Branding challenges.

Zigurds has unique blend of education for the age of globalization and digital technologies - MBAi from Brandeis International Business School (Boston, 2005) and bachelor degree in computer sciences from Riga Technical University (1993). He writes a blog PieZZīmes on marketing, branding, strategy and design <http://www.zigurdzakis.lv> (in Latvian) and is author of many of presentations, keynote speeches and trainings related to Communication Strategy, Marketing Communication in Digital Age, Design Thinking and Branding.

3 Story,
not information,
in the center

"Designer (marketer) is master storyteller whose skill is measured by his or her ability to craft a compelling, consistent and believable narrative"

"Change by Design" Tim Brown, IDEO

Government Digital Service
Design Principles <http://gov.co.uk>

Listed below are our design principles and examples of how we've used them so far. These build on, and add to, our original digital principles.

- 1 Start with needs*
- 2 Do less
- 3 Design with data
- 4 Do the hard work to make it simple
- 5 Iterate. Then iterate again.
- 6 Build for inclusion
- 7 Understand context
- 8 Build digital services, not websites
- 9 Be consistent, not uniform
- 10 Make things open: it makes things better

"Digital services so good people prefer to use them"

5 "It's not what you say that matters, it's what you do"

... but don't forget to tell the story

Initiatives > Campaigns
Code of Conduct / Guiding Principles

Evaluating your communication: How to tell whether you have had an impact

By Guy Dominy

Evaluating your communication:
How to tell whether you have had an impact

Guy Dominy

5th June 2014

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Campaign & Marketing Performance Framework

Tertiary

- Activity effectiveness ratio
- Engagement ratio (e.g. No. of positive tweets, re-tweets or blog posts)
- Unique visits to web pages (e.g. Campaign page)
- No. of Partnering Organizations

Secondary

- % Purpose-based / Message goals
- % Branded / Tailored
- Key messages / tone
- Channel mix
- Media reach (e.g. reach/visibility, branding)

Primary (Core)

- Website / Database strength
- When to communicate (e.g. Return on Investment (ROI) where possible)

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Three drivers for and three levels of evaluation

1. To make our campaigns better
2. To demonstrate our impact
3. To demonstrate the value of communications

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Making your campaign better . . .

INPUTS
The activity that you carried out

OUTPUTS
How many people saw or heard your activity?

OUT-TAKES
What effect did activity have on their awareness, understanding & attitude?

INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES
Did they do anything as a result of your activity?

FINAL OUTCOMES
Did you achieve your overall objective?

Metrics or indicators

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UK Government Principles for Performance Frameworks

1. The performance framework must contain communications objectives that are aligned to the strategic priorities of the organisation.
2. Each communication objective in the framework must be underpinned by Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely (SMART) measures that are clearly defined.
3. The performance framework must contain a selection of input, output, out-take and outcome metrics on each communication activity.
4. The performance framework should comprise a selection of both qualitative and quantitative evidence that is consistent and comparable.
5. Ensure the measures in your framework reflect integrated activity (e.g. Press & Digital).
6. The performance measures should be within the communication directorate's sphere of influence.
7. Ensure you take account of other influences/interventions that may impact your communication activities.
8. Agree a limited number of high-level outcomes that provide a summary view of your performance.
9. Senior management are accountable for overall performance, so it is essential to secure their early buy-in.
10. Ensure the performance measures are regularly reviewed, documented and communicated.

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Demonstrating our impact



What is the “incremental effect” of our activity

Impact = Outcomes less what would have happened anyway

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7

Three ways to identify the impact of our campaign



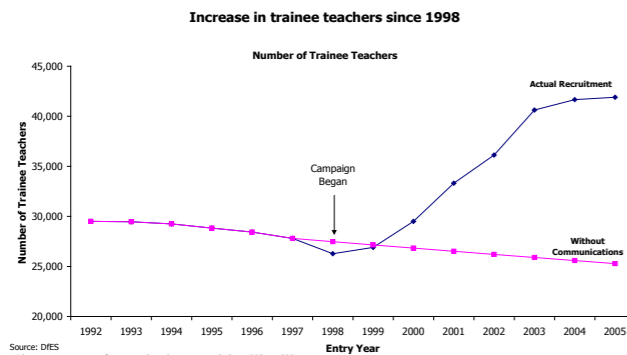
We need to demonstrate the “incremental effect” of our activity.

- Three possible ways:
1. Trend analysis
 2. Econometrics
 3. Test and control

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8

Method 1: Trend Analysis

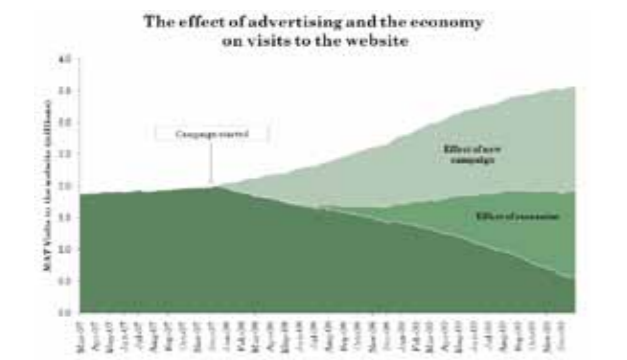


Source: DfES
Without communications figures are based on average decline 1992 to 1998

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Method 2: Econometrics



Source: DfES (Econometric model)

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10

Method 3: Test and Control



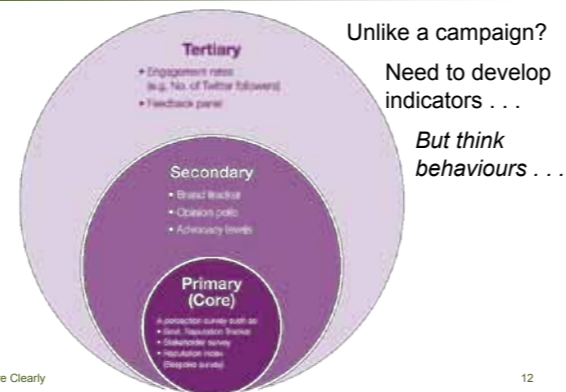
Test Cell is the same as Control Cell except for your campaign. Same demographics. Usually select Group A randomly.

Test running the campaign to Group A but not B.
or
Running different versions of the campaign to Group A and B.

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11

Reputation Performance Framework



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12

Determining impact for non campaign communication



Not the same as campaign communication in many ways but .

- Again only three possible ways to determine impact:
1. Trend analysis
 2. Econometrics
 3. Test and control

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13



Guy Dominy

Director and senior consultant at Seeing More Clearly, UK

Freelance marketing/stakeholder and political communication. Project managed, planned and facilitated restructuring of Welsh Government Communication (Summer 2012). Training government communicators in strategy, evaluation, use of behavioural theory and procurement (27 courses over last two years).

An insightful communication specialist – with the experience and skill to devise solutions for complex marketing, stakeholder and political communications problems, the

determination to drive through and deliver sophisticated strategies to successful implementation and the personality to get along with almost anybody. A career spanning academia, business, charity and public sectors has included technical/analytical through operational to strategic contributions.

Guy Dominy is also an associate providing training for UK Civil Service in addition to specialist communication training. He has trained and assisted in the delivery of a number of policy-making and management skills training for UK Civil Servants. Including training Analysis and Use of Evidence, facilitating Working Across Boundaries, Personal Impact and Implementing Change for organisations including the Ministry of Defence, Serious Fraud Office, DVLA, Companies House and Crown Prosecution Service.

Previously, Guy Dominy was a strategic consultant at the UK Central Office of Information providing high quality marketing communication advice and strategic counsel across government. Delivered over 60 communication projects on time and within budget including review of all of Department for International Development's promotional activities in the UK and developing the strategy for the successful recruitment campaign for children's social workers.

Questions



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14

Open and sustainable government communication

By Signe Znotiņa – Znota

Communication just as a process is not our ultimate task.

Communication is so much more than just providing some flow of information. Communication is a great and crucial part of any reforms. This means understanding and respecting our clients (the media, entrepreneurs, NGOs, every citizen), providing and sharing content which they need and find useful; using format and channels that are convenient for them to receive information; analysing the output and outcome of any communication action, etc. Only in this context we have valid reason to consider that Government's communication is sustainable.

It is important to emphasize that the public in Latvia shows low trust in the Government, politics, and public administration as a whole. **Therefore our mission, aim and the basic principles are:**

- To develop, modernize and strengthen the capacity of public participation;
- To provide a transparent Government decision-making process and ensure full public participation;
- To provide high quality public partnership and participation in the Government decision-making process;
- To implement modern, digital, innovative and sustainable Government communication.

And we are on our way. Let us introduce you with some case studies that we have implemented to develop and ensure that our Government is open, modern and sustainable .

I Live broadcast of Government sittings - an opportunity to watch them online wherever you have access to the Internet. II Initiative "Let's make less burden together!" and campaign "Pass to get a better result!". These are new and sustainable initiatives that we are developing step by step, and we focus on quality instead of quantity. These initiatives are targeted for motivated audiences.

I. Open Government

- It all started in November 2002, when Government sittings became open. Not only for members of the Cabinet of Ministers, but also for media representatives and other participants (NGOs etc.)
- Since June 2013 Government meetings are broadcasted live. So almost all year around.
- Latvia is one of very few EU countries where Government sittings are broadcasted live. You can follow them every week wherever there is an Internet connection available!
- It is also important to emphasize that the most questions of Government sittings are discussed in its open part, and only those related with the national security are discussed in the closed part.
- Why live broadcasts? Because it is important to achieve society's trust in the Government, civil service and public administration in general. It enhances the level of discussions. It allows following the argumentation process and results of the decision-making process. And we do care about it.



Signe Znotiņa – Znota

Press Secretary to the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Latvia

Signe Znotiņa – Znota is responsible for everyday communication of the Cabinet of Ministers and State Chancellery, media relation management and different government event organisation.

She is motivated to help developing a small, efficient, transparent, and professional civil service in Latvia. Signe is member of the Latvian Public Relation Professionals Association. She has participated in several social projects, including "Youth Academy "Pacelt Pasauli"" project "LEADERS FOR Better YOUth", Xerox social project "Abuse. Inaction."

Previously she managed the press office of the Latvian National Opera House, and for six years she has been working at the integrated communication agency "Reputé" Consultant and afterwards account director. She was project manager for Integrated PR and Marketing Campaign «Tetra Pak Juice Pack Collection Game» that was awarded in contest «Golden Hammer 2012».

Signe has studied communication science at Rigas Stradins University, and currently is studying MBA Creative Industries Management at School of Business and Finance.

II. Public involvement to help minimize the administrative burden and inadequate bureaucracy

- It is very important to be able to engage society and cooperate with them to improve the efficiency and quality of public administration processes.
- And not less important is to provide evidence that their needs and ideas have been heard and considered, and that there is a practical reason to engage and cooperate.
- Two years ago the State Chancellery started its initiative "Let's make less burden together!" The State Chancellery has developed a platform where everyone can see the outcome and output of participation. We received hundreds of really great suggestions and ideas how to solve absurd and ineffective processes, circumstances etc. Some of the suggestions have already been implemented.
- Due to the active participation the State Chancellery launched its campaign "Pass to get a better result!" - to ensure wider popularity of the initiative and to provide new tools for participation – a new website and a mobile application "Football in public administration" or "Football in the governmental sector".
- It is all about the fact that we are interested not only how governmental institutions are measuring their achievements in "fight with bureaucracy", but also – what is the evaluation from real consumers and the society!
- As we far as we know there is no other Government except Latvia where a mobile application is created for the society with the aim of cooperating and assisting in making less burdens and fighting excessive bureaucracy.
- The most common questions and suggestions are about the taxation policy, EU fund investments and related processes, social issues, about too much paper work is required where it could be managed electronically instead etc.
- The initiative by the State Chancellery is implemented in the highest level, the Prime Minister of Latvia has asked line ministers and state secretaries to follow that their subordinate institutions are doing maximum effort to develop small, efficient and professional public administration. And, of course, political support is more than crucial to really achieve changes.

III. Other participation and partnership options

- We are educating and raising awareness in the society about involvement and partnership options and principles.
- All legislation documents are available electronically.
- At the moment the State Chancellery is working to develop one single portal where all legislative documents would be drafted and confirmed. This would allow to strengthen the decision-making process and to automate the technical processes.
- There is a Government-level meeting with NGOs every month. It is a Memorandum council linking the governmental and NGO sectors.
- Since July 2013 green papers in Latvia have been implemented;
- The involvement processes are becoming more and more digital.
- The number of NGOs is growing every year, as well as the intensity of their involvement in the decision-making processes.

2002

Valdības sēdēs runātais aiziet nebutībā

Changes in the future, not only journalists to declared by the new government, but also that part of society to make sure how come to a concrete decision what each minister say, who had the last word?

Can we expect any changes in the future, which would allow not only journalists to enjoy the openness declared by the new government, but also that part of society that personally wants to make sure how the government has come to a concrete decision- what did each minister say; who had the last word?



Campaign "Pass, to get a better result!" by State Chancellery launched in 2014:

- New digital and sustainable tool for participation - mobile application "Football" and modern website for initiative "Let's make less burden together!"
- Progress in "fight with absurd bureaucracy" not only from GOV institution perspective, but also the real time evaluation from GOV main customer - society.

#opengovernment

GOV

- June 2013: live broadcast of government meetings in Latvia.
- Latvia is one of rare EU countries where everyone can follow government sittings online. Only internet and interest needed!
- Most questions of GOV sittings are discussed in the open part.

Why live broadcasts?

- To achieve society's trust in public administration that is low right now.
- To higher the level of discussions.
- To allow following the arguments and results of decision making process. We do care about it.
- To provide innovative and modern participation in government decision making process!



- Latvia - probably the only EU country where a mobile application is created for society with aim to cooperate and help make less administrative burden and fight with inappropriate bureaucracy!
- Most common questions and suggestions are about tax policy, EU fund investments and related processes, social issues, criticism about too much paper stuff where it could be managed electronically instead etc.

November 2002: government sittings became open in Latvia - not only for media, but also NGOs, and other invitees' related with GOV issues.

2013

WHICH EUROPEAN UNION MEMBER STATES OFFER LIVE BROADCASTS FROM GOVERNMENT SITTINGS?

LIVE BROADCAST FROM FREE CONFERENCES IS AVAILABLE

LATVIA

#lessburden



State Chancellery's initiative "Let's make less burden together!" launched in 2012. Public participation to help minimize administrative burden and inappropriate bureaucracy!

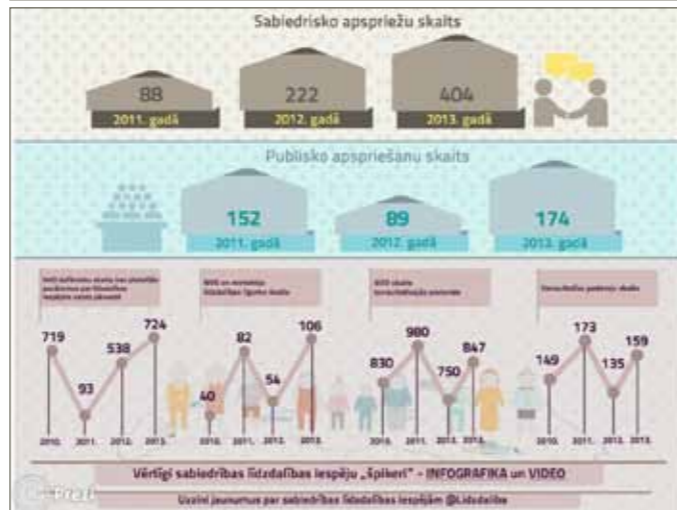
- Digital platform where everyone can see the outcome and output of participation.
- Hundreds of great suggestions and ideas received, how to solve absurd and ineffective administrative. Parts of received suggestions have already been implemented.
- Everyone is welcomed to participate!

Real civil service employees took part in the campaign "Pass to get a better result!" (not super or top models)

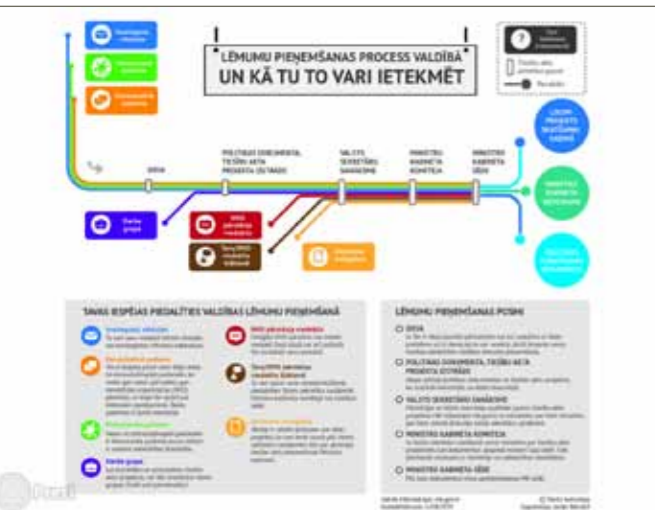
INFO: Metaphor behind "Football" is - when public administration provides low quality service, including forwarding people to other institutions or experts with no reason, it's called "bad football".

We kindly ask civil servants to play good football! And society - to participate and announce (pass) about problems so we can solve them.

The initiative by State Chancellery is realized in the highest level, the Prime Minister of Latvia has asked ministers and state secretaries to follow up that institutions are doing maximum effort to develop small, efficient and professional public administration. And, of course political support is more than crucial to really achieve changes.



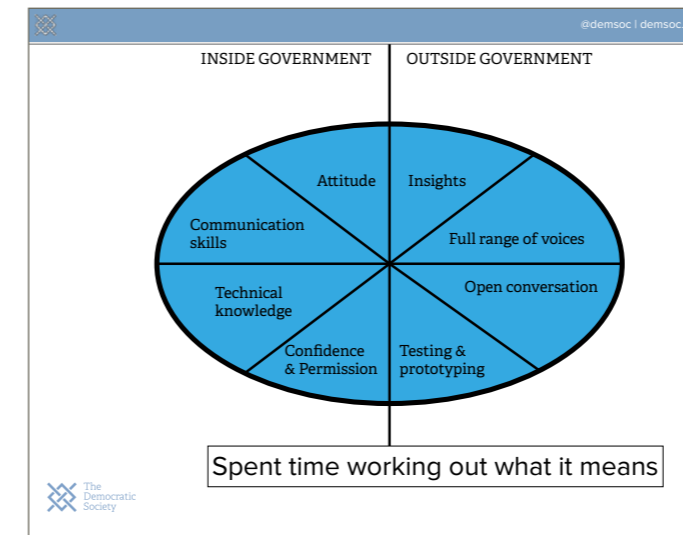
#Partnership
#Participation



- We are constantly educating and raising awareness in society about participation and partnership options and principles.
- All legislation documents are available electronically.
- State Chancellery is working to develop one unite portal where all legislation documents will be drafted and confirmed. This will allow to fasten the decision making process and to automate technical processes.
- There is government level meeting with NGO's every month. It is Memorandum council linking government and NGO's sectors.
- Since July 2013 green papers in Latvia are implemented.
- The participation process is becoming more and more digital.
- The number of NGO's is growing every year as well as their intensity in decision making processes.

Open policy making, in the open. Co-designing communication and participation processes

By Anthony Zacharzewski



The first was that it was harder to build an audience than we had imagined. We needed multiple interactions with people to convince them that we were taking their participation seriously.

Because we're all democratic technicians, we also had a problem speaking language that the public could understand. It was too easy for us to slip into geek speak or start using our internal jargon. Breaking this habit was particularly important for this project, as some of the groups that we were dealing with included those with severe communications or learning difficulties.

We underestimated our capacity. We wanted to be as open as possible, but didn't realise how much the broad scope of NHS Citizen would bring demands on us from people within the NHS wanting us to speak at events and involve them in the process. That internal enthusiasm is a good problem to have, of course, but it turned into a significant time commitment.

Finally, three lessons:

Change both sides. The most important part of NHS Citizen for me is the human relations element, which requires a shift in attitude from the public and a shift in attitude from NHS managers and strategists. If these go too far out of sync people feel frustrated.

Experiment small but plan big. NHS Citizen will cover 50 million potential users. We are trying to build something on a small scale, in public, but we're never forgetting that may have a large take-up.

Design for many possible futures. We don't know what the outcome of the next election will be, and what changes to NHS structures will take place after that. We are therefore designing on the basis of a citizen/NHS interaction that doesn't require any particular organisational structure. This gives us maximum flexibility post-election.

NHS Citizen is being designed and delivered by the Democratic Society, Involve, Public-i, and the Tavistock Institute. You can find all the details at nhscitizen.org.uk

One of the projects that we're working on, NHS Citizen, is a good example of the UK government's open policy making programme – both in its broad approach to evidence and in the manner in which it is being designed.

NHS Citizen is meant to bring greater openness and accountability to England's state run health service. It tries to balance the idea of accountability through a small group, such as a traditional board or committee, and a broad social accountability.

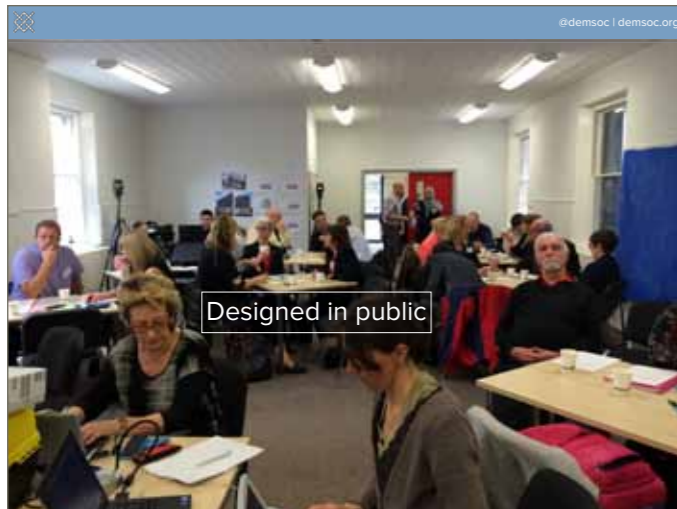
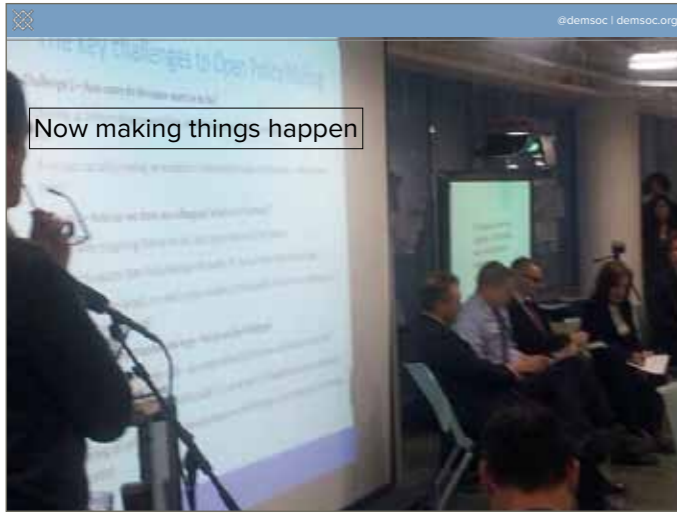
NHS Citizen, as currently envisaged, seeks to give an overview of the public conversation and evidence on the health service (in an area called Discover) then allowing people to raise issues they feel the NHS ought to be discussing in an evidence base, outcome focused discussion area called gather. A six monthly assembly meeting with the NHS Board present is the place where nationally-significant issues that have been raised can be discussed.

We have been designing in the open as well, with a series of public events and blog that contains multiple previous drafts of the document. Rather than patting ourselves on the back, I wanted in my presentation at the Club of Venice to talk a bit about the problems that we have faced.

Find out about participation opportunities!

It's like a metro map - you can jump in and jump out in the station that is most relevant and appropriate in your situation!





Anthony Zacharzewski is a former Treasury, Cabinet Office, and local government official who set up the Democratic Society in 2006. The Democratic Society works with every level of government to support citizen participation, create a new democratic opportunities and open the policy-making process.

10 thoughts: Commission on Public Debate conference, Paris

By Anthony Zacharzewski

Posted on the “Democratic Society” blog ⁽¹⁾ on June 17, 2014

My “Slee blog” – ten instant personal reflections – on the Colloque CNDP ⁽²⁾, in Paris, an international (but largely French) conference on public participation.

1. Superficially, at least, the French and UK debates seemed fairly similar – same issues and similar questions being asked overall. But the French participants seemed to feel that their participation efforts were very top down – more than elsewhere (not sure how true that is)
2. The CNDP – a government funded supervisor and organiser of public debate – is an interesting structure, but one that needs to be brought up to date. It may need to broaden its remit, but the question is how and in which direction. There are multiple roles “in the middle” between public and government, and I’ll write a longer piece about the options for that shortly.
3. There are several organisations similar to Demsoc in France, but most seem to be working more like think tanks. We’ll be keeping up the conversation with a couple of them.
4. Politicians in France are just as confused by how to handle the demand for participation as politicians in the UK. They’re starting to understand the need, but still grasping for the method.
5. It’s strange to be in a conversation on participation and not know anyone in the room. It gave me a strong flashback to four years ago when Demsoc was just starting out. Not an unpleasant experience, but a reminder of how difficult it is to keep even half an eye on all the work that’s going on in the democracy sector.
6. I need to get better at speaking French if I’m going to be able to get into the conversation. More generally, democracy needs local language as well as local knowledge – but also needs to be joined up across linguistic and regional/national borders. One of the biggest problems, and machine translation won’t crack it.
7. The missing participant was Government (a strange thing to say, perhaps, when the entire event was run by a Government body). There were various of ministers and others giving their view, but there wasn’t a sense that proper participation demands different behaviours and attitudes in government, developed in parallel with citizen capacity.
8. Croissants in Starbucks in Paris (where someone wanted to meet me before the event) are the saddest thing in the world.
9. The format was rather staid – many people on stage talking, then questions at the end. There were a couple of side events (which unfortunately I wasn’t able to get to) that seemed a bit more open, but overall it was a bit “sage on the stage”. A participation conference should model the behaviour it wants to see.
10. Perhaps the difference I felt between British and French conversations on participation was the “republican-ness” of the French debate. There was a sense that participation was an essential civic act rather than something consumerist (as it can be in the UK) – but at the same time there was a feeling that the Republic therefore ought to be making the running. There was a lot of what the state should do, and not much about what we should do, in other words.

⁽¹⁾ <http://www.demsoc.org/author/anthony-zacharzewski/>

⁽²⁾ “International Symposium Citizens and Public Decision-Making” – Paris, 16-17 June 2014 (<http://colloquecndp.fr/>)

Now what, Europe, now what?

by Anthony Zacharzewski

Posted on the "Democratic Society" blog ⁽³⁾ on May 28, 2014

As the alcohol hangover from Sunday night fades, we can start to enjoy the political hangover. Here in the UK, there is a lot of finger-pointing at who "let UKIP in". Across the rest of Europe, the media narrative appears to be the rise of extremes.

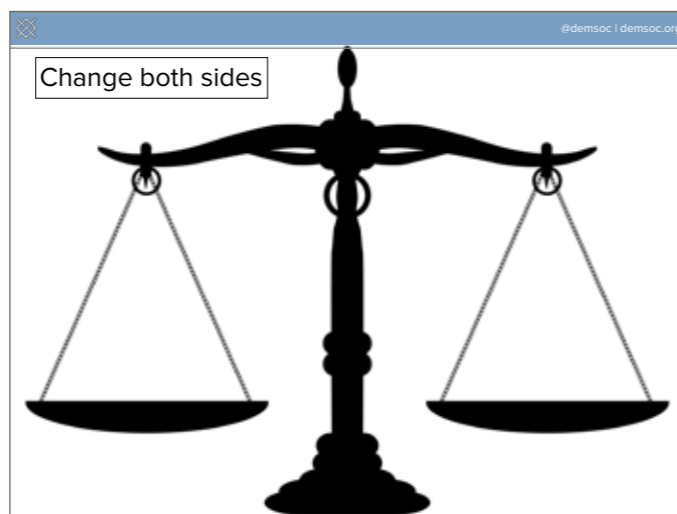
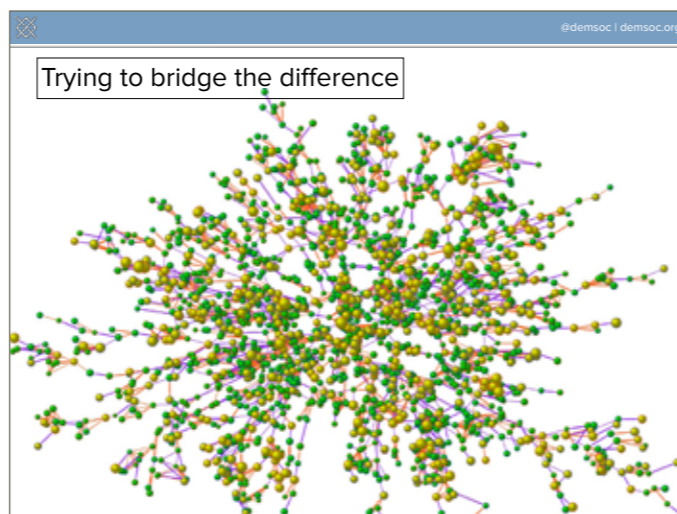
Personally, I think blaming people for the rise of UKIP is a pointless exercise. If 25% of people, or 10% people, or 50% of people believe that the EU should be abolished and immigration should end, then the point of a Parliament is to represent their views. Politicians who want more Europe, or stronger human rights, or a social union cannot win by exiling the views of their opponents. They can only win by fighting and beating them.

In any case, the move to the right was less uniform than the newspapers suggest. As Rob Ford, expert on UKIP, said on Twitter "the only pattern is that there is no pattern". If you look across European politics you can certainly see a lot of common political positions, but the parties espousing them moved in different directions during the elections. The True Finns and the Dutch Freedom Party went backwards, while the Five Star movement in Italy was handily beaten into second place by the exceedingly mainstream centre-left.

Looking to the future, the European institutions have to handle a very cold shower from voters, and a more sceptical parliament. What to do? There was much talk in Brussels this evening of employment, growth, deregulation and reform. All are important, none are enough.

This is an old song of ours, but the EU needs to take on a much less centralised and bureaucratic mindset, and take advantage of its comparative youth and small size (compared to member state governments) to experiment with open and networked democracy. The next commission, #withjuncker or without, must put this at the top of their list of reforms, or no employment or growth strategy will be worth writing – and it'll be the fire next time.

⁽³⁾ <http://www.demsoc.org/author/anthony-zacharzewski/>



Learn Something New Every Day

Communication professionals need to continue professional development and networking with each other

By John S. Verrico

"So, you admit that you lied on your job application." I was stunned when my boss said this to me in response to my request to attend a professional training seminar. "You were hired because you said you had skills," she said. "But the fact that you are asking for training is an admission that you don't have those skills after all." It is rather insane to think that you could ever know all you need to know, and that you are beyond needing training. Unfortunately, throughout my 33-year career as a government communicator, I have run into this attitude a few times, though never again to this extreme. I find it interesting and disconcerting that agencies readily encourage and approve training for topics such as accounting, acquisition, program management, computer skills, and various trade certifications, but do not necessarily see communication as a priority. Yet, in no career field is it more important to continually refresh our skills, learn new tactics, and network with peers as it is in the communication professions. The ever-changing landscape of media, social media, politics, and public perception of government make it necessary for us to keep up with trends, learn from each other's successes and failures, and continuously add to our toolbox of skills.

Professional networking organizations such as the **Club of Venice** in Europe, the **National Association of Government Communicators** (NAGC) in the United States, and the **South East Europe Public Sector Communication Association** (SEECOM) understand the importance. In their own ways, they each offer critical opportunities for professional government communicators to get together, to learn from each other, and enhance skills.

In the United States, among periodic webinars, in-person training seminars, and other networking events, the NAGC holds an annual Communication School that brings together communicators from federal, state, and local government agencies for training on the latest tactics in the public and private sectors, develop skills, hear from a variety of speakers and share stories with each other. The latest NAGC Communication School concluded on June 13 in Washington, DC, after three days of intense training sessions on speechwriting, branding, social media, briefing the boss, working with reporters, creating graphics and dozens of other topics.

The School started with half-day pre-conference workshops on conflict resolution and video production. The video workshop was designed to help people with no video skills to learn to quickly produce short video clips and b-roll from their mobile phones or other devices of sufficient quality to release to the media and public.

There were keynotes on being innovative in the field, handling crises, rolling out major initiatives, and communicating internally. There were also plenary panels focusing on the state of the media and the results of a survey of how government uses digital media in the United States and Canada. A special keynote from the SEECOM **Secretary General discussed** how the government in Montenegro is engaging the public in policy decisions.

One of the most popular features of the School is a session called "30 Great Ideas in 30 Minutes." This is a rapid-fire facilitated session where the attendees take turns contributing ideas that can be described in just a sentence or two. The ideas are captured and sent out to the attendees after the School. This year's batch of ideas seemed to predominantly focus on internal communications and provided insight on internal websites, employee recognition, and getting leadership to walk around the office. There were also great ideas for working with freelance reporters, community relations and issuing public challenges for innovation.

The theme of the conference was "Harnessing the Power to Inform and Engage Citizens" and played with the idea that government communicators are super heroes. To add an element of fun to the proceedings, the event program was designed to look like a comic book and there were comic book and super hero related décor and references throughout the event.

A full agenda of this year's School's program is on the NAGC website: www.nagconline.org or directly at <http://nagconline.org/CommunicationsSchool/Agenda2014.asp>. The NAGC Communication School and other training offerings are open to everyone, although members do get discounts.

The annual Communications School is also the forum for peer recognition. Each year, the NAGC holds the Blue Pencil and Gold Screen Awards competition to showcase the best in government communication efforts. Communicators from around the world submit their work to be judged by their peers. This year saw NAGC's first European winner when the Government of Montenegro took first place in the Mobile communications category for their "zero grey economy" campaign. The award was accepted by Montenegro's Vuk Vujnovic.

This was also the first time when an international entry was selected as 'Best in Show.' The NAGC Board of Directors reviews all of the first place winners from among all of the 41 categories to determine which entry best exemplifies the tenets of government communication. The entry "Changing the Face of Local Government" from Rocky View County in Calgary, Alberta, Canada was selected for its humorous and humanizing approach to connecting citizens and government programs. Rocky View County's communication manager Grant Kaiser said of the awards program, "It helps bring credibility to the profession, and strengthens the case for the clear, open communication that I believe we all strive to provide citizens. For my own organization, winning a NAGC award has been terrific for staff morale. But most importantly, it has already helped me strengthen the idea that communicators belong at the table when decisions are made, and not just called in to 'sell' those decisions afterwards."

Every entry receives written feedback from the judges who are fellow government communicators or subject matter experts in that category. You may want to consider entering your efforts into next year's competition. More information on the awards program can be found at <http://nagconline.org/Awards/BlueGold.asp>

In a separate competition, NAGC also honors the Government Communicator of the Year, selected from nominations across all levels of government. Exceptional efforts of professional communicators, elected officials or other government personnel are judged by a panel of communication professionals on the impact they have on constituents or stakeholders, and the success of enhancing the image of government. This year's winner was Kerri Richardson who led the communication efforts for the launch of affordable health-care in the U.S. state of Kentucky. More information on her recognition and previous awardees are also on the NAGC website: <http://nagconline.org/Awards/Communicator.asp>

These recognition programs and the opportunities to converge with peers help to validate our profession, continue to refresh our skills and keep us up to date on the tools and tactics available to us to promote the good work of government.

The world is dynamic and ever-changing. Just when you think you know it all or have all the skills you need, something changes. Disasters happen that require the government to respond and provide new services. The public's perception of government is in continuous flux and could shift in a moment with a single public announcement from a government official or the release of information – accurate or not.

As professional communicators, we must be continuously learning, building upon or add to our knowledge base and skills, and sharing what we've learned with others. Whether it is from participating in a webinar, attending an in-person class, reading articles and related periodicals, participating in online discussion groups, or attending events such as the NAGC Communication School, we should never pass up an opportunity to learn something new every day.



John Verrico is the President of the National Association of Government Communicators in the United States and has more than 33 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 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 president, John previously served as the association's Director of Professional Development and the Director of Communications. He also served on the leadership boards for the Federal Communicators Network and the U.S. Navy Public Affairs Alumni Association, and in various leadership positions with Toastmasters International. He is an honorary member of the South Eastern European Public Sector Communicators forum (SEECOM).

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.

Editors' note

The essay « Struggling with an Opportunity » published by the European Centre for Political Studies in May 2014, reproduced here below, aims to make a short, objective assessment of the first 10 years of membership to the EU of Central Europe and Baltics countries”.

The authors focus on growth and jobs, social inclusion, better redistribution of funds and the need for reform of the structural funds in this direction, to help us better understand if citizens' expectations were met and how much should still be done to make progress while sharing joint responsibilities in the Europea project.

After years of global crisis which have been affecting most countries of Europe, and where the impact of recovery actions can only be measured in large and long-term scale, it is not uneasy at all to have an idea of the state of mind of the countries that have joined since 2004 and the difficulty of keeping the “momentum” after membership.

The themes covered by this analysis are shared by almost all the EU member states and are among the priorities of the former Greek and the acting Italian presidency of the Council of the EU. They continued to be treated by the Club in the past presidency. The communication component is indeed very present, though not explicitly mentioned, because the readers will be able to appreciate the structure of this contribution and its infographics in addition to the author's very open analytic approach. We trust that its key elements will induce us all to a thorough reflection about issues in a key region of interest for the development of Europe as a whole. Its presence honours “Convergences” and enriches the way forward of the Club.

The editors.

Struggling with an Opportunity:

The first 10 years with the EU for Central Europe and the Baltics. A few lessons

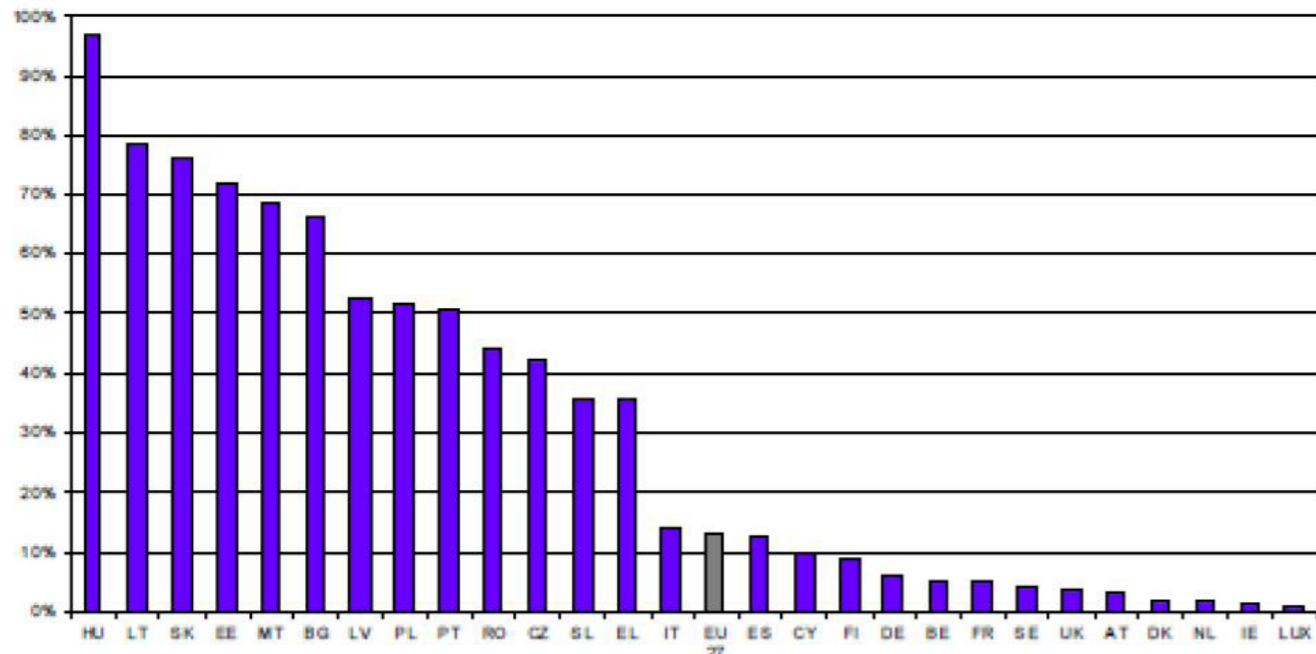
By Kálmán Mizsei and Ádám Kullmann

In 2004, ten new members joined the European Union, radically reshaping its geography and governance characteristics. Earlier expectations predicted a more gradual process of accession – like a more gradual earlier evolution had been expected for the new European currency that had been adopted in 1999 by no less than 11 members. But these were the times of euro-enthusiasm.

Euro-optimism implies that rapid convergence of the new member states would happen both in terms of economic levels of development and, closely related, governance characteristics. Of the former, many studies established a varied picture: strong growth and catching up until the crisis, and highly varied continuation during the crisis.

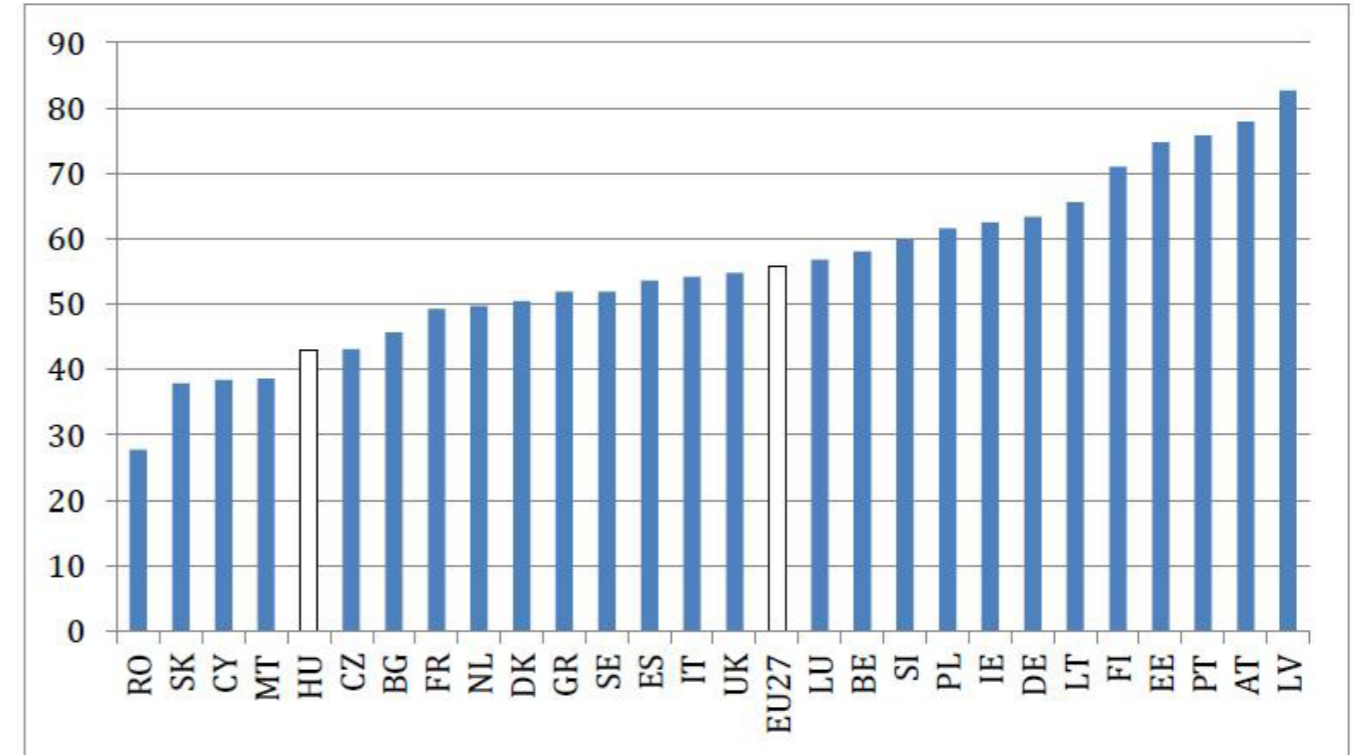
In this short essay, we look at one important aspect of the story, based on our practical experience with EU Structural Funds, particularly the EU Social Fund – since those funds are supposed to contribute to convergence, and thus to the EU's internal cohesion. Our work at trying to link the EU funds with such a vitally important issue as the Roma exclusion in the region has revealed a complex web of obstacles to a functional use of the funds. The starting point is that EU funds are proportionately much more important for the new EU member states than for most of the old ones simply because their per capita GDP is much smaller. Thus, their share of EU funds is larger both in GDP and as a percentage of the national budget, as well as of public investment. Hence it is particularly important that the funds are used strategically.

Structural Funds and national co-financing as % of total public investment (average 2009-2011)



Source: European Commission (2012): EU Structural Funding for Growth and Jobs.

ESF 2007-13 interim payments, as % of the envelope in the country, by 30/11/2013



Data source: European Commission (<http://ec.europa.eu/esf/BlobServlet?docId=249&langId=en>).

Evidence reveals, however, that such an approach is sorely lacking. Truly national debates about the structure, proportions and mechanics of the use of EU funds are not taking place, thanks to the overall deficiencies of the democratic process. If there is no strong national leadership about the best way to use the funds, inevitably the stronger lobby interests will prevail at the expense of the weak. Thus the principle of cohesion and solidarity are upset in the national context. This problem goes hand-in-hand with strong corruption of the use of funds. The European Commission comforts itself in having very strong 'control' mechanisms in place. Well, these control mechanisms are limited to a narrow administrative-accounting oversight. Businesses and officials in most of the former socialist countries are far too innovative to be constrained by even enforced accounting rules. The EU oversight processes implant very little real strategic thinking in the allocation of funds and distribution mechanisms.

One could imagine two broad approaches and their combinations: one that looks at the bottlenecks to economic growth and tries to eliminate them; the other that tries to increase social cohesion through improving the life chances of people and communities with little access to public goods. Neither of these approaches is seriously discussed nor their combinations. Allocation mechanisms are prisoners of private interests – since much is at stake. So far thus the big promise of structural funds has not materialised as they are not spent strategically.

Improperly designed EU funds have a particular crowding out effect as well. Not only do easy public funds crowd out private funds, but they also perpetuate a behaviour that those of us old enough to have had experience under socialism know: dependence on, and waiting for, the state to provide resources. The market reform is unfinished. We need to be mindful that public funds are yes, badly needed, but they do crowd out entrepreneurship and if improperly used, their net effect may easily turn out to be negative.



Kálmán Mizsei served as Chairman of the Board of the program between 2007 and 2013. He was also the European Union's Special representative for Moldova while previously he had served as Regional Director of UNDP for Europe and the CIS.

After being responsible for coordinating the preparation for the first and second EU programming periods in Hungary, **Adam Kullmann** has been working at the Open Society Foundations as co-director of the Making the Most of EU Funds for the Roma programme. CEPS Essays offer scholarly observations and personal insights into topics of critical importance in European affairs. The views expressed are attributable only to the authors in a personal capacity and not to any institution with which they are associated.

Added to the above problems is the fact that many of the NMSs (new member states) lack administrative capacities to use the much-needed – and wasted – funds fully.

If one looks at the table above, it reveals the paradox that the countries that need it most for their development are using it the least. And among the NMSs, the poorer and worse a country is governed the less it uses the funds proportionately – Romania being at the low end of the table. The less well-governed countries are also the ones that are the poorest, so the share of EU funds in their national budgets is relatively the largest.

From this the following conclusion needs to be drawn: the structural and cohesion funds were designed for situations of (relatively) good governance. With the accession of poorer and worse-governed Central and East European countries, the challenge has emerged to get the EU more involved in the way the funds are used. But not only is more involvement needed but also a better understanding of international development at the level of the European Union.

These shortcomings surface in another way as well: while being by far the largest development donor, the EU is famously passive about the way it spends this money (often taking the position of an 'administrative redistributor' rather than a donor). The reason is similar: lack of proper understanding of what kind of aid investment is generating more economic growth and more social inclusion, less inequality. The current EU fund mechanisms thus are very suboptimal. In some cases, probably Poland being among the better ones, EU funds seem to be used at least to some extent to help to bridge the developmental gap. The EU sees itself as a redistributor of funds and in no way as 'donor' But the developmental challenge in most of the new member states is, unfortunately, too formidable to permit such a luxury.

Thus ideas for radical reform of EU funding are needed. One option is to move forward towards linking funding with policies (see 'ex-ante conditionalities' in the new legislation) and results ('performance framework'). EU funding could perhaps be best utilised if one part is used for decreasing government debt, and another part for introducing a limited number of significant policy reforms, e.g. linked to EU2020 targets. Partnership contracts between the EU and the member states could describe these policy reforms, and the mix of tools including legislation, institution-building, national and EU funding. First steps towards such a reform could be taken already with unspent funds ('de-commitment') in the 2014-20 budget period.

The overall balance of the first 10 years then is positive but not as overwhelming as it should be. If countries have difficulty with democracy, surely they would have more if the EU's peer and institutional pressures were not in place. But even more normative pressure is needed. Likewise, the NMSs need more vigorous economic systems to close the developmental gap – and more clever use of public funds. In the meantime, the EU is also caught up in an existential crisis. Luckily, some of the reforms that the EU as a whole needs are also ones that the individual new members need: sharper market incentives on the one hand and more institutionalised solidarity on the other.

Only if the EU – and its member states – are unburdened from some of the inertial spending and overregulation can they, on one hand, show more vigorous economic growth but also re-allocate funds that increases cohesion such as more complete energy networks and that also increase social cohesion by targeting the needy better. Thus, the fate of the EU at large and its new members' successes are intimately linked. This is going to be the story of the second decade.

Co-creating our European future

By Verena Ringler

In Convergences 4 /2014, I discussed the changing paradigm of communication, and how it has reached government and the EU-level. I believe communicators today are invited towards a radical rethink of the notion of an “audience”, because the roles of recipient and giver of information are increasingly merging. In a next step, we are invited to rethink the notion of “voters” or “citizens”, because the roles of policy-taker and policy-maker will also merge. We can observe that yesterday's idea of communication is changing swiftly into an idea of participation, and is on the road of developing into an idea of co-creation.

In the last months, colleagues asked me to tell them more about co-creation and its possible involvement in today's democratic life. The concept of co-creation touches the core of our relationship with the future. Let me therefore share the considerations and lessons learned in the Network of European Foundations' tenth anniversary initiative for the future of Europe. Two years ago, the NEF invested in a futures initiative to decipher pathways out of the ongoing situation of crisis in Europe. A team of futures specialists was hired to design and facilitate a three-day “Unconventional Summit on the Future of Europe”, which aimed to contribute to ways forward of and within the EU.

The following is an adapted excerpt of our article on the NEF initiative in the June 2014 edition of the Journal of Futures Studies, “Collaborative Futures: Integrating Foresight with Design in large-scale innovation processes: The seeing and seeding of the future of Europe.” There, Angela Wilkinson (Strategic Foresight Counsellor, OECD), Martin Mayer (Independent Futures and Innovation Consultant), and I told the story behind the NEF initiative, at the core of which were practices of ‘collaborative’ and ‘transformational’ foresight.

The NEF starting position was that European integration, overall, was too good to fail. Convening seemingly unlikely allies in an era of crisis seemed necessary. Those allies were considered people who already play or are soon likely to play an important role towards bold decision-making, robust social peace, and thriving communal, civic, and economic life in Europe. Eventually, 50 participants were scouted and personally invited to a three-day summit. They consisted of two groups, “EU insiders” (from national and EU public administration and political bodies, think tanks, etc.) and “EU outsiders” (innovators from a range of disciplines).

The peak event took place in September 2012 at Stift Altenburg, a Benedictine monastery in rural Austria. The challenge was to create a space for a generative high-power dialogue that would go far beyond the usual conference based exchanges – something that would continue after the event in the form of multiple, ongoing collaborative actions, including spin-offs.

There was no panel and no powerpoint. The imperative was not to fix a problem that has been inherited from the past but to clarify and transform future possibilities in order to overcome inertia and sustain more and more effective collaborative action.

To this day, we position the NEF initiative as relevant to ongoing attempts to link the parallel fields of foresight, design, strategy and innovation. “Transformational foresight” practices require effective participation to redesign whole systems and enable messy (i.e. multi-dimensional) transition management. They involve a social learning process that is more similar to seeing, seeding and growing the future than engineering a new solution. Thus, we led participants in a sequence of broad and deep situational analysis using scenarios followed by a visioning-to-value creation ideation process.

Some previous efforts to link foresight and innovation appear to emphasize the promise of a “controllable” future, in which carefully managed interventions achieve predictable outcomes (i.e. engineering solutions). Other attempts connect foresight-design with innovation, in terms of more open, social processes of creative destruction and construction, involving collaboration between different interests (i.e. inter-organizational settings that result in unpredictable, emergent changes that can be steered towards better outcomes). We suggest that linking foresight, design and innovation to create a better future through collaborative innovation and co-creation benefits from using mixed (i.e. multiple) foresight methods. The mastery of what we call the modern futures toolkit is crucial. It depends on an understanding of the strengths and limitations of a variety of futures methods, an ability to effectively tailor them to the purpose at hand and avoid conflating or confusing one with another (e.g. scenarios are not forecasts or visions).

We had fathomed that making movement in the interests of better futures for democratic societies requires a more inclusive approach of foresight to-co-creation than the conventional, linear method of speaking truth-to-power across the science-policy interface. Resolving the eurozone crisis, enabling a global energy transition and progressing global sustainable development are not simple problems but puzzling and messy situations. These challenges involve more than technological substitutions i.e. product and process innovation.

In opening up the participation to achieve ‘whole’ systems innovation or large scale transition management (as implied in the challenges of sustainable development or global energy systems transition), new challenges are encountered though, and lessons are learned:

- **Who participates and how to frame the system of concern and interaction with it; wider context?** Engendering trust and forging new common ground between participants and organizations with different cultures and/or interests requires attention for constructive conflict and shared learning, rather than a simple push for rapid but shallow consensus building.
- **Caution about fast futures processes is needed.** Listening and learning is painful, especially for established experts who are rewarded for knowing the answer rather than asking better questions. Shared, societal learning requires immersion in often uncomfortable ideas – e.g. the future is never perfect! We felt reassured that our mix of techniques helped to overcome the natural – and often disastrous – biases of projecting current conditions into the future and seeing only what we would like to see (Sommers, 2012).
- **A co-creation event is the beginning, not the end, of a process.** Plausible, alternative stories about the future do not automatically create impetus for change. Instead, we suggest that to trigger societal large-scale transformations, scenarios need to be combined with other methods e.g. the visualization of a viable, new value creation system. By opening up the future as a safe space for constructive conflict, it is possible to manage disagreement as an asset and forge new common ground in a way that sustains social learning and collaborative interactions between diverse stakeholders. We also note that insights from well executed transformational foresight initiatives can fail to bring about social innovation, because too little focus is put on the afterlife of prospective sensemaking processes.
- As the demand for co-creation approaches rises also in the political world, we want to remind possible sponsors or organizers that multi-stakeholder settings tend to generate a high level of energy and mobilization just before and during the actual physical (or virtual) collaboration spaces (exploration, ideation, design). For a process design and facilitation team, the main challenge is rarely related to the co-production of the various stakeholders during the strategic dialogues, but rather to the creation of conditions for continued collaboration once the energizing event is over and participants move on with their lives. So, only if such events are clearly defined as steps in an overarching process, the intended transformations can take form and develop over time.
- **Devising the afterlife of a co-creation event** Change does not happen overnight and for this reason the collaborative event has to be embedded into a continuous and carefully managed (meta)change process, or afterlife. Support and sponsoring measures can range from soft factors such as branding, convening, liaising, and networking opportunities to stakeholder engagement strategies or the provision of seed funding for specific initiatives. Generally, there appears to be a kind of dynamics inherent to pub-

lic multistakeholder agencies (administrations, think tanks, NGOs ...) that make funding of closed loop, project based initiatives with a clear end much easier than to support open loop, on-going and iterative processes with no clear end in itself. Also, public agencies and foundations tend to fund research rather than application, yet learning with futures cannot sequence them that way. Project sponsors should therefore start to think in slightly longer cycles in a “think-test-learn-adapt” approach committing to a clearly defined level of support over the entire process chain in order to move from a single loop towards a double or triple loop learning process.

To put our co-creation experiment in the larger context, let's summarize that we are in an era of **fast, interdisciplinary and agile co-creation**. Also in our political and public sectors, futures methodologies can be inspired by new methodologies such as Agile/Scrum, SmartMobs, Hack'days, etc. In principle, those approaches involve a community of thinkers, doers, makers and tinkerers applying their skills and energy to accelerate the work of cause-led innovators and change makers. They are all about diverse groups of people collaborating, working in new, faster, multi-disciplinary and better ways by supporting ideas and people that are leading the way to what a flourishing 21st century society might look like. These techniques are inspired from the software development and digital world. They will spread more and more into more traditional fields. They represent how stuff gets done by Generation Y, so we should get used to it, learn, and adapt.



Verena Ringler is a Europe Project Manager with Germany's Stiftung Mercator. Previous stints have been as Deputy Head of Press and Public Affairs with the International Civilian Office / EU Special Representative in Kosovo (2006 – 09) and as Associate Editor with Foreign Policy magazine in Washington (2002–2006). She is a frequent public speaker on Europe (Club of Venice, TEDx) and is a member of the European Forum Alpbach's advisory board.

In her project, Verena encourages the cross-fertilization between Europe's politics and administration realm and the private sector's innovation and leadership insights. Moves from linear to lateral approaches and from mono-perspective to interdisciplinary conceptualization in the EU profession, she suggests, would enable the whole sector approach the systemic problem sets of our time with systemic response mechanisms. See more at europeancommons.eu

* Wilkinson, A. Mayer, M., Ringler, V. – Collaborative Futures: Integrating Foresight with Design in Large-Scale Innovation Processes—Seeing and Seeding the Futures of Europe. Journal of Futures Studies 6/2014, p.1-26. For a film on the co-creation case study that is explained in the JFS article, see vimeo.com/51020885, password: nef10

'Who speaks on behalf of Europe?'

From the speeches of the founding fathers to the 'political speak' of tweets

By Michaël Malherbe

In a short few years, the arrival of social networks has brought about an unprecedented revolution for EU spokespeople. But it is not the only notable great transformation. Since the mythical era of its origins, with the 'disruptive' speeches of its founders, two concurrent movements influence the evolutions of Europe's message – on the one hand, institutional reforms, and on the other innovations in the media: written, audio-visual, Internet.

Multiplication of European institutions and explosion of media: the European message shattered

Between the period when the European community was founded at the beginning of the 1960s and today, both the institutional landscape of the EU and the horizon of various forms of media have been disrupted, which has had profound consequences on who speaks on behalf of Europe and how. Regarding the EU, the institutional triangle dominated by the European Commission has left room for a better balance with the European Parliament, undoubtedly, which has been democratically elected by universal suffrage since 1979, but above all with the European Council, the most recently formed institution. As far as the media is concerned, it seems unnecessary to elaborate on the explosion of TV and radio channels, press headlines and above all Internet sites over the course of the past few decades, even considering the brutal crisis which has hit news media.

With regard to EU spokespeople, this broadly translates to an evolution from the 1960's 'Olivi system', which according to Gilles Bastin¹ consists of a small inner circle with access to information in Brussels characterized by an extreme porosity between EU media correspondents and the spokespeople of the Commissioners who speak on behalf of the European project, to the present situation where, according to Luuk Van Middelaar², the "voice of Europe" i.e. the voice of the European peoples, is expressed during the European Council sessions which bring together heads of State and government.

These evolutions make those who speak on behalf of Europe less audible on account of their own multiplication (European Council, EU Council, Commission, Parliament) but also because of the explosion of news media vying for the public's attention. Furthermore, social networks are overthrowing conventional hierarchies, codes and spokespeople on behalf of Europe.

European discourse on Twitter: a 'new political speak'?

The polyphony of discourses of the various European institutions on Twitter, analysed by Sandrine Roginsky³ in "'speak neutrally' or 'speak honestly?'" summarises many aspects of the issues regarding communication on behalf of the EU today: confusion, hybridity and paradox.

'Twitter allows for the merging of different types of communication particularly as speakers who represent widely varying positions are all put on a level playing field', so it is difficult to find one's bearings amidst such confusion:

- Confusion regarding the multiple positions of those distributing the messages; from the simple civil servant tweeting on his own behalf to the Commissioner who represents the entire institution with his words;
- Confusion between registers of communication; expression (personal point of view) versus information (institutional message);
- Confusion between target audiences; technical information for specialists, easily comprehensible information for the general public and personal information and politics which incite personal expression.

On Twitter; it is evident from the observations one can make of it and its evolution over time that the communication of the EU is reflected by its institutions.

In terms of observation, hybridity is without doubt the most striking element. The tensions between administrative and political staff are partially resolved by the hybrid status of the spokesperson, in other words, by a number of civil servants taking on a political role, whilst administrative staff depends on political personnel when it comes to expressing the right tone of communication.

In terms of evolution, the paradox is more interesting. The contradiction resides in the same movement of encouraging European civil servants to use social networks, whilst also inviting them to respect a series of rules which depersonalizes and frames what they say.

In sum, it is not so much the complexity, or even the confusion between 'speaking neutrally', a consensual and neutralized form of communication, and 'speaking honestly', a more personal and opinionated form of communication, that is striking according to Sandrine Roginsky's analysis, but rather the seeming emergence of a new type of "political speak".

The public word of European institutions on Twitter corresponds to a kind of falsely post-ideological new language for insiders which confines the discourses of European institutions to what is 'politically correct' in order to avoid confrontation and controversies, and which also observes a calculated respect for 'net-etiquette' in order to avoid causing any offense or 'bad buzz'.

To some extent, this 'diplomatic language' which refuses to take positions, even seems to claim, if one considers the rare public remarks of Koen Doens, head of the EC Spokesperson's Service reported by PR Week⁴ in May 2004: 'The Commission does not position itself on an ideological axis because this institution doesn't serve an ideology. Its composition is multi-ideological.'

In conclusion, the word of European institutions, in particular on Twitter, is indicative of the fundamental trends in EU communication: a somewhat disappointing strategy under construction of confusing hybridity and rather depressing paradoxical injunctions.

¹ « Une politique de l'information ? Le « système Olivi » ou l'invention des relations de presse à la Commission européenne », Gilles Bastin in La communication sur l'Europe – regards croisés, Centre des Etudes européennes de Strasbourg, 2007, pp.125 -135

² Le passage à l'Europe, Histoire d'un commencement, Editions Gallimard NRF, 2012, chapitre « Au nom de l'Europe », p. 58 et suivantes

³ « "Parler neutre" ou "parler vrai" ? Polyphonie des discours sur les réseaux sociaux : le cas des institutions européennes », Sandrine Roginsky, 2012

⁴ « Inside the mind of European Commission Spokespersons Service chief Koen Doens », May 06, 2014 by Alex Benady, PR Week



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He occasionally also lectures for the ENA and Sciences-Po Lille. Since 2007, he has managed the blog "Décrypter la communication européenne": lacommeuropeenne.fr

700 experts share their views on innovative EU and government communications

On 15 and 16 October over 700 communication experts from local, regional, national and EU authorities will gather in Brussels for the 5th edition of EuroPCom, the European Conference on Public Communication. They will share their experiences in communicating on Europe and will discuss the trends and innovations in government communication and citizen engagement strategies.

The 5th EuroPCom conference, the major event on EU public communication, will cover various thematic strands. More than 50 expert speakers from all over Europe will take the floor in one of the 17 workshops, debates and interactive conversation sessions. They will share their insights on the lessons learnt from the latest European elections, on the new perspectives for EU communications, on the potential of public diplomacy, on synergies with media and communication agencies, etc. Several sessions will focus specifically on how to bring in innovation and creativity in government and EU communications. The conference will also present the winners of the second European Public Communication Award, for which no less than 28 public administrations from 12 different Member States submitted their proposal.

During the conference Christophe Rouillon, Mayor of Coullaines and Vice-President of the French Association of Mayors, will present the opinion he has been drafting for the Committee of the Regions, on how to reconnect the EU with the citizens. The opinion focuses on the intermediate role regions and cities can play in European communication, both as a multiplier for institutional and political information and as a platform and facilitator for citizens' participation. Christophe Rouillon will discuss the key ideas with stakeholders from the local and regional level and propose a set of recommendations to the communicators of the European institutions.

The EuroPCom conference is an initiative of the Committee of the Regions, in partnership with the European Parliament, the Italian EU Presidency 2014, the Council of the EU, the European Commission, the European Economic and Social Committee, the Club of Venice and other professional associations. Communication and government strategy experts from all levels of government can register for the event until 6 October 2014.



Preliminary programme

EuroPCom 2014
Imag[in]ing Europe
 5th European Conference on Public Communication
 Brussels | 15-16 October 2014

www.cor.europa.eu/europcom



Preliminary programme

EuroPCom is the meeting place for communication managers and senior experts of local, regional, national and European authorities.

Lectures, debates and interactive workshops will focus on major challenges in EU communication and public communication.

The focus of this 5th EuroPCom conference will be on innovation and creativity in European government communication.

Information and online registration:
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Venues:
 European Parliament and Committee of the Regions, Brussels

Wednesday 15 October 2014

11:00-13:00	Plenary opening session Rethinking EU communications				
13:00-14:15	Networking lunch				
14:30-15:45	[A] In between EU elections	[B1] Followers or trendsetters?	[C1] The soft power of public diplomacy		
16:00-17:30		[B2] From the street to the cloud	[C2] Global reputation building	[C3] Communicating Europe worldwide	[D] Speed geeking
17:45-18:15	[E] The pyramid of total connectivity				
18:15-20:00	Networking reception				
Thursday 16 October 2014					
9:30-10:45	[F] Pull, push or nudge?	[G1] (Not) all art is propaganda		[H1] Purchasing creativity	[I] Reconnecting Europe with its citizens
10:45-12:00		[G2] Europe in images	[G3] Make it arty	[H2] Media partnerships	
12:15-13:00	Plenary closing session The promise of a new narrative				
13:00-14:00	Networking lunch				

EuroPCom 2014



Public diplomacy in progress

By Vincenzo Le Voci

I recently read a “Mentor Book” entitled “American Diplomacy 1900-1950”¹ written by George Kennan, a US diplomat who in the last century served as Ambassador to the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia and subsequently taught history and international affairs at Princeton University. In his capacity as renowned diplomatic historian, Kennan made a perfect evaluation of the US foreign relations with a view to reflect on what was needed at that time to help preserve peace and stability in the world which had just come out of two terrible conflicts.

“I cannot refrain from saying that I firmly believe that we could make much more effective use of the principle of professionalism in the conduct of foreign policy; that we could, if we wished, develop a corps of professional officers superior to anything that exists or ever has existed in this field; and that, by treating these men with respect and drawing on their insight and experience, we could help ourselves considerably. However, I am quite prepared to recognize that this runs counter to strong prejudices and preconceptions in sections of our public mind [...] and that for this reasons we are probably condemned to continue relying almost exclusively on what we might call “diplomacy by dilettantism”.”

Well... after more than half a century, the issue raised by Kennan remains topical and should sound like a warning bell. Today's world continues to experience a complex combination of economic, political and social difficulties. And Public Diplomacy is mirroring nowadays' trends. This is indeed a very challenging field, where countries' central governments, as well as regions, cities, and international organizations and institutions are striving to shape their own specific dimension. Shape it before sharing it...and this global engagement requires a “multitude of actors and networks”².

Public diplomacy, “soft” diplomacy, reputation management, traditional/cultural/social diplomacy, external educational dimension and branding are, with different nuances, part of the same business, but are increasingly challenged by the newly emerged media landscape. In other words, diplomacy always runs the risk of...arriving too late. But professionalism and share of techniques and experience can help strike the balance.

Verena Nowotny (former spokesperson of the Austrian PM Chancellor and today's communication advisor at Gaisberg Consulting and expert on Far Asia nation branding trends), has sharply pinpointed Anholt's statement³ that “good public diplomacy rests on three ingredients: “strategy, substance and symbolic actions”⁴.

The global attention is drawn to individual conflicts and social instabilities scattered throughout the world in leopard spots (some erupted suddenly and unexpected, others with very deep roots in the times). The question raises how public diplomacy efforts can help individual countries and continents to

search a new way, not only to search for a new method, not to merely assert their prestige, authority and strength but to disseminate a culture of winning social, cultural, educational, ethical values that can be globally shared.

The recommendations made by Verena in her above-mentioned contribution concerning the “EU's and its member-states' homework to do in terms of coordination and cooperation” are an appeal to full engagement, to common sense and to commitment to act through a wide spectrum of practices. There is a need to address any lack of strategy and vision, seeking coherence and ensuring continuity, preventing PD players and specialists in branding from getting content with scattered actions. There is also a need to draw inspiration from good examples of transnational cooperation – for instance, progress made in bilateral share which provided random, but crystal-clear success (ie. the collaboration in cultural field between Denmark and Egypt or between Bulgaria and Tunisia, or the correlation between Cultural Diplomacy and Cultural Exchange in Cases of the British Council and the Korean Cultural Center) as well as from single charismatic figures (e.g. the Pope in his struggle against inequalities and for the humblest and weakest, Malala fighting for the education dimension and for the women's role in society, Mandela's heritage as need for reconciliation, peace and human rights recognition and protection).

Governments are eager to know, analyse and understand how their messages are perceived and interpreted by citizens in other countries. Meanwhile, technology has been providing additional “power” to communicate to other players (or professional profiles?) while action in this field was previously confined within the traditional monopoly of governments.

Promoting a common, corporate identity made of solid branded values is not a one-off initiative which can be launched without proper reflection, but requires a long process of self-understanding and knowledge of a country's principles and means.

Strategy comes afterwards. Setting up goals and identify target audiences comes afterwards. Only when the players are ready, if they are conscious of their vision and willing to dedicate reasonable resources, outreaching foreign audiences can be a successful phase.

Some countries may also be more motivated than others in public diplomacy and branding efforts because of the specific national and regional realities which they are leaving – so that a high degree of collaboration on public diplomacy matters can be detected between states which are organised in a federal way (this entitles them to take particular care of important sectors of their society such as culture, economy, education which belong to their own special “territorial” competences).



Cultural events and educational exchanges are then de facto recognized (though not unanimously) as huge public diplomacy opportunities. And huge events can be catalyzers for great branding campaigns of remarkable impact (i.e. Copenhagen Cop-15 on Climate Change in 2009, Chopin's Anniversary campaign in Poland in 2011, Croatia's EU membership referendum campaign in 2012-2013, Paris Cop-21 on Climate Change in 2015, Milan Universal Expo “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” in 2015, the European Year for Development 2015, etc.).

The Club of Venice decided to take Public Diplomacy on board in November 2007, when meeting in plenary in Rome (exceptionally convening in the capital on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Rome Treaties). Since then, it organised four thematic seminars, respectively in France (2009), Malta (2010), Poland (2011) and Cyprus (2012) – and is planning to develop further analysis and debate in this domain.

The Club plenary meeting in Tallinn in June 2013 enabled participants to pursue the exchange of feedback on today's PD trends and strategies. An ad hoc session on “reputation management” was introduced by Simon Anholt (who was one of the distinguished international experts who attended the first PD seminar convened by the Club in Paris in 2009) and enriched by a contribution from Ole Egberg Mikkelsen, Under-Secretary for Consular Services and Public Diplomacy at the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Traditional PD definitions shared by participants within the Club depict this topic as “direct or indirect communication of one state with the citizens of another state, engaging with key stakeholders such as political parties, NGOs and special interest groups, engaging through the media (by articles, interviews, “classic” internet presence and pro-active approach with “social media”) to communicate policy goals”.

While waiting for the appointment of the next High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for the European Union, I remain convinced that the strength of governments and international institutions such as the EU essentially lies in their use of public diplomacy utilising “soft power”, which relies on culture, values and policies. As I mentioned in my former contribution to Convergences on this issue, the government communicators who attended the Club seminars organised on this topic identified as examples of EU's “public diplomacy” or “soft power” a wide variety of PD-related themes. These include development, enlargement, the European neighbourhood policy, the role as a whole of the EU in the world and in particular the

EU's and its member countries' capacity to intervene with wisdom, with a vision of mutual respect and cooperation, in more or less turbulent social and geo-economic scenarios or in geographical areas already showing steady growth but still in need of structural support.

Public Diplomacy is one of the most powerful communication tools. If used properly, it can have a strong impact on international cooperation and in relations with all ranges of audiences and stakeholders, from the closest to the most remote. It can be the key feature to earn reputation, to use Simon Anholt's expression, as a “country which does good for the world”⁵.

¹ Edited in 1951 by the University of Chicago

² USC News, “Top 10 public diplomacy stories of 2013 reveal global trends”

³ At the Club of Venice plenary meeting in Tallinn in June 2013

⁴ Verena's “We don't want to be European” was published on Convergences' n° 2

⁵ https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_anholt_which_country_does_the_most_good_for_the_world



Vincenzo Le Voci, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice (network of communications directors from the European Union Member States, institutions and countries candidate to the accession) is a EU Council official since 1992. He has worked on Transparency and Information Policy issues since 2001 and is currently coordinating the work of the Working Party on Information.

Within the EU Council Secretariat he consolidated his experience by working for the Linguistic Division, Research and Development, Education and Culture and Staff Training Depts. Before reaching the EU framework in 1992 he worked in the NATO as Housing Manager for the US Air Force (1985-1991).

Soft Power: it still matters

By Verena Nowotny

A current tour d'horizon on soft power and public diplomacy from Latin America, Asia to the Arab world and Europe reveals some interesting shifts in the allocation of soft power and triggers a more thorough consideration about what is actually appealing to citizens around the world.

Even if one did not keep one's fingers crossed for Brazil to win the Soccer World Cup, one could not help to feel the pain of the nation when the tragedies against Germany and the Netherlands took place. For Brazil soccer is a form of soft power. Even more, it is the form of soft power that Brazil applies the most. Therefore, the loss in the World Cup was more than a sporting event; it was a loss of international prestige and a blow to the pride of the nation. The excruciating fall of the national soccer team somehow mirrors the disillusionment of the Brazil people who were placated only for a short time by the first victories but now again express their strong discontent with the government and challenge the benefit of hosting such major events that come with enormous costs.

Observation no. 1: Soft power comes at a price. If people are still hungry for basic needs, you better deliver some tangible results – otherwise the soft power endeavours of a government might be turned against them.

When in May this year, the Chinese Prime Minister Li Keqiang visited Africa, he could reap some rewards for China's long-term efforts in public diplomacy on this continent. Mulatu Teshome, the president of Ethiopia, was happy to converse with Li in Chinese and both heads of state could revel in the good old days, when they were both studying at the renowned Beijing University. Teshome is one of the tens of thousands of African students who earned their university degree in China during the last decades. At the end of 2013, 33,000 Africans have been studying in China; until 2015, the Chinese government wants to push that number even higher by granting up to 18,000 full scholarships. As of late, also the public TV station CCTV offers a master programme, which has been attended by 42 African journalists so far. In general, China is increasing its public diplomacy efforts in Africa, not only by offering education but also by investing in cultural infrastructure such as theatres or sport arenas.

Observation no. 2: The classic means of public diplomacy such as scholarships, student exchange and educating the media – still work. But you need perseverance and a long-term vision to actually experience positive effects.

What works even between so cultural diverse countries like China and the African states can also be witnessed within the Arab world, especially since the beginning of the Arab uprisings. Syria, Iraq and Egypt, once holding not only hard but also soft power, are consumed in internal turmoil. In the meantime, public diplomacy efforts of the Arab Gulf states have spiked – again using the traditional tools – and gained significant momentum. According to the World Bank, these states are today amongst the most generous donors when it comes to financial aid; a lot of this support going to neighbouring countries such as Egypt or Yemen. Financial resources also matter with regard to television production and filming: nowadays a significant proportion entertainment is filmed and recorded in the Gulf cities of Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Doha. The two leading news channels of the Arab world – Al Jazeera in Doha and Al Arabiya in Dubai – are engaged in a heavy competition to win the hearts and minds of the Arab public.



Verena Nowotny, a partner at Gaisberg Consulting, served as a spokesperson for the Austrian government for more than 10 years. During her time as foreign policy spokesperson for the Austrian Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schüssel she was also responsible for the communication during Austria's EU presidency in 2006.

When Austria was elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the years 2009/10, she acted as Austria's spokesperson in New York.

With more than 20 years of international experience, she now supports businesses, start-ups and institutions in the areas of strategic communications, public affairs and crisis communications as an independent consultant.

Verena holds a Master's degree in political management from George Washington University (Washington, DC).

The Gulf cities have turned themselves into globally recognized brands, while traditional Arab cities such as Cairo or Damascus have become synonymous with unrest and violence. The cities have invested heavily in museums and universities, attracting talent from across the Arab world and beyond. A survey of young Arabs found that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) topped their list of preferred countries to live in, scoring almost twice as high as the United States. The Gulf cities have further become major meeting points for the world, hosting large international events and meetings. Investment in smart infrastructure also pays: Dubai has become the seventh most visited city in the world and its airport is ranked the world's busiest airport, in terms of passenger numbers.

Observation no. 3: Money can buy soft power – if invested and used in a smart way. Paying particular attention to the needs of neighbouring countries definitely increases the acceptance of a broader public.

So are the Arab Gulf states good countries in terms of what they do for planet earth? No – would be Simon Anholt's answer who presented his new "Good Country Index" in June this year. Anholt, internationally known as a strategy advisor and nation brand expert, has spent the past two years compiling an index to determine which of the 125 examined countries contributes most to the common, global good. Across seven categories, including areas like science and technology world, prosperity and equality, health and wellbeing and within each category further sub-sets of data were compared. The winner is: Ireland, followed by Finland and Switzerland. The U.S. rank number 21; outperformed by 17 European countries as well as Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

Anholt explains that his motivation to establish this index is his wish that ordinary citizens should start thinking about whether countries are good or bad – and not only whether they are successful. As countries nowadays are tightly connected "people along with politicians and businesses need to start to ask themselves about the international implications of what they're doing."

The idea reminds of Corporate Social Responsibility, only on a government or nation state level; and Anholt stands ready to admit that. "When I first started working on this, I came up with this ludicrous tag 'Governmental Social Responsibility' because it is an exact equivalent."

Observation no. 4: Is this the long awaited tool to measure soft power and thus the effects of public diplomacy? I doubt it for various reasons:

1. The underlying data and criteria are not only partly difficult to compare but also not necessarily meaningful when it comes to the positive impact on the world.
2. An index might serve as an argument for politicians but it is not strong enough to trigger action from citizens.
3. Blaming and shaming sells well with the media; however, as everybody knows that it rarely serves as a means to change unwanted behaviour.
4. Citizens reflect implications of what their country is doing when they get involved – be it as an interested citizen, as a member of an NGO, an activist etc.

Long before Joe Nye came up with the idea of "soft power", the Italian Communist Party leader of the early 20th century, Antonio Gramsci, made the distinction between two kinds of power, or as he put it, hegemony. For Gramsci, hegemony of the state was based on force, or hard power; the state must establish a monopoly over the means of violence in order to maintain order. But the allegiance to a worldview by the public must be earned and cannot be enforced. In his view, it is soft power, or the consent of the civil society, that legitimates hard power.

Also in today's world, legitimacy must be earned – partly by performance, partly by trying to win the public's consent for necessary policies. Simply labelling governments or states as good or bad will not do justice to the complexity of today's world of politics.

Towards Enhanced Strategic Communication

“The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting.” (SunTsu)

By Evelina Melbarzde

The idea of fighting for people’s minds has already been in existence for some centuries. The communication environment is evolving rapidly due to imminent evolution of information and communication technologies.

The communication of “one-to-many” is gradually replaced by “many-to-many”. Information flows are on the rise, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to exercise control over them. In general, even where people are empowered, they can be manipulated, if they do not have the requisite skills to critically evaluate and interpret. In the light of this, media and information literacy becomes imperative in order to navigate in the deluge of information.

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Strengthening NATO StratCom

The Alliance has to adapt to the changing communication environment. It should be well equipped to leverage the opportunities and counter the potential threats in the information space. NATO’s political and military leadership is determined to further strengthen the strategic communications (StratCom) capabilities of the Alliance and take full advantage of the emerging opportunities, including the use of social networks and mobile platforms.

Since 2009 the Alliance has taken several important steps to enhance its StratCom capabilities.

First, in its StratCom Policy and other supportive documents, NATO has defined StratCom as “the coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communication activities and capabilities (Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Psychological operations and Information operations) [...] in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO’s aims”.

Second, a StratCom coordination mechanism has been established within the Alliance.

Furthermore, a number of StratCom-related courses have been introduced in the NATO School in Oberammergau.

NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence

The Government of Latvia has committed to support NATO in the field of strategic communication. The proposal to create a StratCom Centre of Excellence (COE) as an international NATO military organization in Riga was finalized in January 2014. In July 2014 Estonia, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland and the United Kingdom joined the initiative and, along with Latvia, became the founders of the NATO StratCom COE. The NATO accreditation process for the StratCom COE is expected to be completed before the September 2014 NATO Summit in Wales.

The StratCom COE will closely cooperate with the NATO HQ, SHAPE, ACT and other NATO structures to enhance the Alliance’s StratCom capability. Like other NATO Centres of Excellence, the StratCom COE will focus on doctrine development, analysis, experimentation, support to operations, and training and education.

StratCom in NATO’s Operations

It has been recognized within the Alliance that StratCom is instrumental to achieving political and military goals. Due to this, StratCom has become an essential part of NATO’s operations. In the modern communications environment a principle enshrined in the Constitution of UNESCO has become more important than ever: “*Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed*”. The information space has turned into a new battle ground where different actors fight for the hearts and minds of their target audiences. Military success alone does not necessarily secure the success of an operation, as the battle might be easily lost in the information space. For example, the lessons drawn from the Operation Unified Protector (OUP) reveal that the strategic communication by the Gaddafi regime forces was appropriately attuned to the local sentiment of the target audiences, and thereby to the most relevant media profile. What is more, the Gaddafi regime took advantage of NATO’s hesitation to communicate on the number of civilian casualties and readily provided the international media with images and information supporting the regime’s message.

Another example is NATO’s engagement in Afghanistan. NATO has invested significant effort into implementing the NATO/ISAF Strategic Communications Framework. This has been no easy task due to the lack of a “StratCom mindset” and an insufficient understanding of the target audiences. The insurgents often prove to be more effective in the communications field, preventing the Alliance from fully achieving its goals – to communicate progress and diminish support for the insurgents and criminal patronage networks. As the active military engagement phase of the ISAF operation is coming to an end, it is vital for the Alliance to draw the key lessons on StratCom from it and institutionalize them in the operational planning on all levels.

The Way Ahead

In close cooperation with other NATO bodies, the StratCom Centre of Excellence is aspiring to become a source of competencies and provide contribution to the strengthening of NATO’s capabilities in the field of strategic communications.



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Prior to that she has served in Latvian diplomatic missions in Madrid, Strasbourg and Brussels, in the latter as spokesperson.

Evelina holds a Master degree in Political Science from Latvia University and a Master degree in Communications and Arts from Complutense University in Spain.

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Communicating the POLSKA brand

Based on abstracts from the Rules for Communicating the POLSKA brand.

By Magdalena Kudlicka*

The experience of other countries teaches us that the standing of a national brand has direct impact on the value of brands originating from that country. And what makes a brand's standing high is the **image**, or things that come to the minds of people from other parts of the world when thinking about a specific country. The clearer and more positive the image, the better reaction to people, cultural creations and products coming from that country.

The strategic approach set out by the rules for communicating the POLSKA brand focuses on those characteristics of Poland and Poles that offer the greatest potential for building a distinctive and attractive national brand image in the local market and abroad. That is why this approach is based on **national characteristics that are most attractive** from the point of view of selected target groups, while simultaneously lending themselves to **credible communication by the brand**. The image is built by people, the landscape, companies and products, culture and its creators, as well as towns and regions. To be successful, the process of building a coherent image of the POLSKA brand must **involve institutions, local governments, companies and last but not least all Polish people**. What this activity hopes to achieve is to **establish a uniform communication framework**.

Until now the POLSKA brand had no one uniform promise that would be promoted in a consistent manner and that could be made to different stakeholders. This led to a situation where, without anyone's intending it, promotional campaigns to build the brand image lacked a common keystone. Irrespective of how good and effective the communication has been so far, it has failed to create a clear idea of **who** is talking, **what** they want to promise and what they can **offer**. That is not to say that specific items of communication should be identical, but rather that they should always have a common element: the promise, the way of showcasing the country's strengths, the style and language, the visual layer and one common brand sign.

The point of reference for the Rules for Communicating the POLSKA Brand was a 2004 study by Professor Wally Olins, which defined the brand's identity and put forward the idea of **Creative Tension**. Having consulted with all the parties concerned, it has been decided to follow up on Professor Olins's conclusions. It was agreed that his analysis of what constitutes the Polish psyche and a country as such was correct:

"Poland draws its personality, power and perpetual motion from a wealth of apparently opposing characteristics. For example: Poland is part of the West and also understands the East; Polish people are passionate and idealistic and also practical and resourceful; the Polish character is ambitious and also down to earth. These tensions create a restlessness unsatisfied with the status quo, and a boisterousness that's always stimulating and often astonishing. This creative tension is why Poland produces so many entrepreneurs, artists and sport-people. It's why Poland is constantly changing and evolving, sometimes tumultuously. And it's why Poles have always tried to achieve the seemingly impossible – and often succeeded."

To give the fullest possible account of what and how the POLSKA brand should communicate, the idea of Creative Tension has been reinterpreted in the context of the belief about Poles' communication potential as stated in strategic papers. Four points describing the identity of the POLSKA brand has been selected:

- 1. Poland is intense:** As people of action who take great interest in the world, Poles are continuously pressing ahead. Despite their geographic location in Central Europe, the Polish people seldom steer the middle course, preferring instead one of the extremes.
- 2. Poland is committed:** We never have enough time for everything. We are not afraid to take risks if we can gain more. Many count on Poles to come as they know that as soon as we appear things will be set in motion. Our zest for action is infectious.
- 3. Poland won't leave you indifferent:** Our proverbial hospitality cannot be overestimated. Few other nations in this part of the world allow newcomers to become so close. It is against our nature to leave visitors to their own devices. We are determined to host them as best we can, show them around and explain everything, even if we are hard pressed for time. We cannot and do not want to leave our guests to themselves, we will not let them be bored even for a minute.
- 4. Poland knows how to swim against the tide:** We can create exceptional things even if we lack advanced infrastructure or resources in a given discipline. We challenge the status quo and we are good at modifying things. We are chronically dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs.



POLSKA. SPRING INTO.

25
YEARS OF
FREEDOM

That all leads to a statement: As all things clash, collide and brush against each other in Poland, the natural, creative and constructive result is that... **POLSKA empowers**.

The above catchphrase encapsulates the idea of the POLSKA brand, its key strategic concept, which should serve as the cornerstone of communication in all areas. **"POLSKA empowers"** is at the same time the fundamental promise of the brand. It is supposed to help authors of future communication undertakings (marketing campaigns, slogans, promotional materials, etc.) understand the essence of the message. **"POLSKA empowers" is not an advertising slogan and should not be used verbatim in promotional campaigns or materials.**

Communication Recommendations

NAME. No matter what foreign language we speak we should always write and say POLSKA. POLSKA is the official international name of our brand. We want every person around the world to learn this name in its original form. We want the Polish-language name to become globally recognizable.

THE LANGUAGE IN USE. We speak a concise and direct language. We are respectful when conveying our friendly attitude towards the recipient. Our narrative is constructed with ease and a light touch. We are not afraid of puns and we use intelligent linguistic devices. The language of communication should be simple but not simplistic.

THE COLOURS IN USE. All promotional materials – from the tiniest gadgets to all marketing publications – should feature a WHITE-RED motif.

RESONANCE OF MESSAGES. Messages need to focus on people. Whenever a message features places, they should be presented through the lens of experiences and meetings. Poland needs to be presented from the point of view of active people who are going through something and experiencing different aspects of being in Poland.

The Campaign

The campaign that has been organized in cooperation with other ministries, in accordance with the principles for the communication of the POLSKA brand. It has been launched in May 2014. The goal of the campaign is to inform the European audience of the enormous progress that has been made in Poland over the last 25 years, its achievements that can be defined by the 3 major anniversaries being marked in 2014, 25 years since the first free elections, NATO membership 15 years, EU membership 10 years.

Londoners could admire advertisements about Poland in 150 different places. The campaign has begun in London, with posters announcing an image-building commercial about Poland. The posters have been placed in the Heathrow Airport, Oxford Circus, Victoria and Leicester Square metro stations and telephone boxes.

The 'Polka. Spring into.' campaign slogan has been coined as an invitation directed at the Europeans to explore Poland and draw inspirations from energy that has driven Poles for many years now. **The slogan results from a carefully thought-out strategy, the concept of Creative Tension and the Poland brings power idea described in the 'Communication Guidelines for the POLSKA brand'.**

* This article is based on a more comprehensive study, published on the public website <http://www.ms.gov.pl/resource/096aa594-87a8-4ba2-9af1-0c713be337a6>:JCR and produced by the SAR Marketing Communication Association and the Polish Public Relations Consultancies Association, prepared at the request of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The 'incomplete closure' of the campaign slogan, leaving room for many interpretations, allows for its usage by various bodies in current and future actions undertaken abroad to promote Poland. The understatement was used intentionally. The goal is to evoke interest, discussion, attract attention, raise controversies. **Linguistic controversy helps to differentiate one message from many others that are correct, but uninteresting.** The use of the phrase 'spring into' is intended to encourage Europeans to visit Poland and benefit from its energy and freshness, simultaneously emphasizing our hospitality and openness towards the world.

A priority audience is in Great Britain, because of the number of Poles that emigrated after Polish accession to the EU. Other important places is Germany, Scandinavian region and Benelux countries.

All the places with large number of Poles and those as well where perception of Poland and Poles need to be reinforced.

The next step was a TV commercial broadcasted by four key international TV channels: BBC, CNN, Eurosport and Sky News. Other tools used in the campaign are social media and public space.



Magdalena Kudlicka

Governmental communication area and social-campaign expert.

Head of the European Union Unit in Public and Cultural Diplomacy Department, Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In charge of carrying out PR and communication governmental campaigns particularly in the European field.

Lately managing an international PR campaign covering climate policy, implementing the Management Partnership's projects, supervising production of 40-episodes' information tv programme covering European issues and Polish membership in the EU, carrying out information campaign regarding the European Parliament Elections 2014 and the 10th anniversary of the Polish membership in the EU. Involved in creating the Strategy for Internal Communication within the MFA. Implementing the communication principles of the POLSKA brand.

Previously working for the Polish presidency in the Office of the Committee for European Integration as Head of the European Information Unit. A trainee for the European Commission within a Training MS Officials Programme.

Ministerstwo Polityki Zagranicznej
Rzeczpospolita Polska

Communicating the POLSKA brand

Magdalena Kudlicka
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Poland

Ministerstwo Polityki Zagranicznej
Rzeczpospolita Polska

A need to enhance the POLSKA brand

- A lot of good initiatives run by various institutions = communication chaos
- No coherent message that would encapsulate Polish uniqueness, convey what Poland is and wants to be in the world
- A survey conducted in August 2013 shows that over half of Poles believe that Poland's promotion abroad is not effective
- A need to create a coherent strategy on how to communicate the POLSKA brand

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Rzeczpospolita Polska

Who, what and for whom

The Council for the Promotion of Poland in collaboration and consultation with institutions that are interested in promoting the POLSKA brand

- The Principles for communicating the POLSKA brand**
- The SAR Marketing Communication Association and the Polish Public Relations Consultancies Association
- For citizens who want to use the uniform visual identity of the POLSKA brand
- For agencies promoting POLSKA, Polish products and services
- For promoters dealing with artifacts of Polish culture and items made by Poles
- For businesspeople who want to promote their products by evoking their Polishness

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Point of reference

The point of reference for the Principles for Communicating the POLSKA Brand was **Creative Tension**, an idea put forward by Professor Wally Olins, a British expert, in 2004

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Virtually all studies underscore that it is the **People (the Polish Nation)** who have the greatest potential to convey positive features

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Features describing the identity of the POLSKA brand

- POLSKA is intense
- POLSKA won't leave you indifferent
- POLSKA empowers through fresh ideas, experiences and commitment, sets the tone for actions, transforms the environment, and leaves no one indifferent
- POLSKA is committed
- POLSKA knows how to swim against the tide

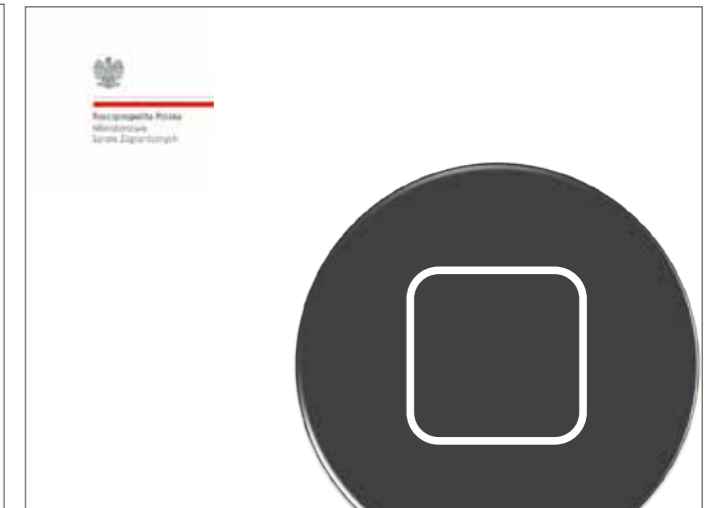
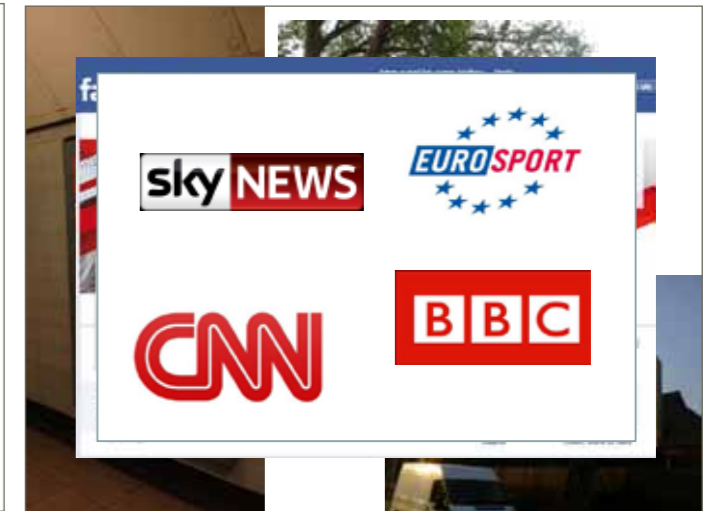
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Components that go along in 2014

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Targeted audience

- Opinion leaders, Polish diaspora; business people - investors; young people (aged 18-35) especially students, internet users.
- European countries with large group of Polish emigrants; especially cities: London, Berlin, Stockholm, Brussels.



Dividing Communications. Riga European Capital of Culture 2014

By Anna Muhka

ESI SVEICINĀTS RĪGĀ, EIROPAS KULTŪRAS GALVAPILSĒTĀ



RĪGA 2014

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

www.riga2014.org

WELCOME TO RĪGA, THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

Current thinking in large organisations sees a distinct division in communications between that to customers – external – and that to staff – internal. The same division applies to major events such as Rīga's year as a European Capital of Culture: external communication to foreign visitors, internal for local people – albeit for very different reasons.

Internal – local communications

For an event of this scale, ownership and participation by the local population are essential, as well as an understanding of culture in its broadest sense: saying good morning to your neighbours, cleaning up after your dog. That is not about every resident of Rīga suddenly starting to go to the opera, the theatre or visit every contemporary art exhibition, but about making them proud of their city and of what is happening here.

One way to increase participation is by taking activities to the people. Prominent events during the Capital of Culture year have to be held where the people are, in neighbourhoods, and with large-scale free events.

Other noteworthy examples include the Opening Weekend with the Human Chain of Booklovers, the Tasting of each programme chapter at the Central Market and the year-round activities at the Esplanāde cultural chalet.

The initiative of residents themselves is also key, as can be seen by the success of the Courtyard Clean-up movement and a variety of neighbourhood-based activities. The Rīga 2014 Foundation paid particular attention to encouraging these as part of our long-term plan to leave an enduring impact on the city. It is not new buildings that are important, it is launching enduring processes to change both the people and the city. That is why the programme was called Force Majeure – the irresistible positive force of culture.

Naturally, cooperation with the media is very significant, both for external and local communication purposes. Rīga 2014 has been very fortunate in this, as all the relevant media have reported on and told the stories of Rīga 2014 events, selecting those appropriate to their audience and giving them the necessary 'flavour'. Despite the shift to social networks, there is no denying the power of media in which people trust.

External – the media, the media and the media again

No advertising campaign can ever be a substitute for positive and encouraging articles with great pictures and Rīga certainly has the capacity to offer those.

Rīga is a city of culture in any year, not just in 2014, but can also provide a range of first-rate 'extras': people interested in culture want to have a good meal and to sleep in comfort, but Rīga's trump card is its compactness – everything in the inner city is within walking distance.

Our willingness to work with the media had a snowball effect, each successive article arousing the interest of other media. Here, special mention should be made of the Rīga 2014 Opening weekend in January. This became more than just a celebration for Rīga residents and visitors – with the chain of booklovers and cultural activities throughout the day in the Central Market, but also visually strong, hence particularly interesting to international television channels. As a result, Rīga featured in a large number of prime time news programmes on that Saturday evening.

The importance of cooperation with municipal and national tourism organizations and tour operators should not be forgotten, they too are a type of media.

Communicating through the medium of international events – the World Choir Games, the Rīga Marathon, the European Film Awards – is attracting a large number of participants from different countries and these are all potential ambassadors for Rīga. Returning home with positive stories about their time spent in Rīga is the best public relations the city could have and such events achieve two positive effects – interesting events with contented participants and positive PR.



1. The Chain of Booklovers on 18 January when around 20 000 people passed books, from hand to hand, from the old National Library building to the new one
2. The Marathon – the Rīga 2014 Kilometre of Culture delighted runners and spectators alike
3. Courtyard campaign: residents of apartment blocks work with professional gardeners and architects to landscape their courtyards, a participatory campaign that is transforming whole areas of the city
4. World Choir Games: 27 000 singers from 73 countries



Anna Muhka

Head of International Communications and Marketing, Riga2014

Anna Muhka was born and grew up in Sweden, before moving to Germany. She is a graduate of the Faculty of Economics at the University of Munster in Germany, with a masters degree specializing in marketing.

She has worked in marketing and sales in both Germany and Latvia, including spending thirteen years at the daily newspaper "Diena" in Rīga, where she was Head of Marketing and PR and responsible for all social responsibility activities of the newspaper.

Thereafter Anna joined the Rīga 2014 Foundation team as Head of International Communications and Marketing.

Emphasizing culture in an environment of diverging political attitudes: Branding Hungary in Finland

By György Urkuti *

Maintaining a country brand in times of harsh political criticism is an uphill struggle. It is even more so with diverging political attitudes of the public – that is, if your target audience is especially sensitive to those issues that are not particularly important for your government or for your home public. This is clearly the case when trying to maintain the traditionally excellent image of Hungary in Finland in a changing environment.

Take the composition of the Hungarian government, for example. It consists of men only at the cabinet ministers' level. (At the junior ministers' level, there are many women, but junior ministers attend cabinet meetings on a case-by-case basis only.) Leading politicians of the governing Fidesz party have stated several times that only performance is what matters, not gender, in making appointments. If gender should also be taken into consideration, it could result in efficiency loss. In Hungary, this argument is generally accepted and it seems to pose no particular problem with the electorate. Certainly, there have been a few critical newspaper articles here and there, but only a small portion of the population seems to bother about the lack of female cabinet ministers, or the scarcity of female politicians in Hungary in general. (As evidenced perhaps by the low number of female MPs elected.)

In a country like Finland, however, the argument about the priority of performance does not sound as convincing as in Hungary. Gender issues are of paramount importance for the Finnish public and the proportion of women in political decision making positions is closely watched. As a result, Finland boasts one of the highest rates of female Members of Parliament and cabinet ministers worldwide. (Interestingly enough, this concern does not seem to apply to leading positions in business life and there are only a few female CEOs in Finland, but this is another story.)

* Disclaimer: The author works as the deputy chief of mission at the Embassy of Hungary in Finland. However, the views expressed in this article belong solely to him personally and should not be taken as the opinion of the Government of Hungary.

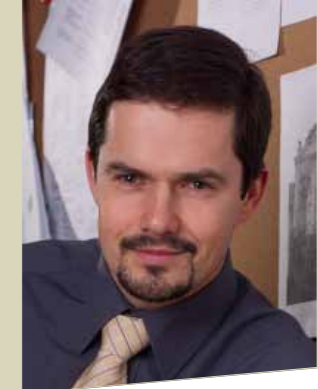
No wonder then that the Hungarian Prime Minister was asked about the lack of women in his cabinet during his lecture at the University of Helsinki last year. He replied that the world of politics is rude and harsh in Hungary, unattractive for women. The answer was generally accepted as an explanation but it was of little help in maintaining a positive image of Hungary in Finland. So when the new Hungarian government was set up, it was only a question of time when the first negative article¹ would be published about the lack of female cabinet ministers.

This example offers but a glimpse at the challenges Hungarian country branding poses in Finland nowadays, the tip of the iceberg, so to speak. A government strongly emphasizing conservative values like family, patriotism and Christian values, with a political agenda of transforming the unsustainable welfare society into a workfare society, can only count on limited sympathy among the Finnish opinion makers, most of whom have a marked liberal and individual bias in a country struggling to maintain one of the most extensive welfare societies in the world. So when it comes to politics, the odds are pretty poor to get much positive coverage for the efforts of the Hungarian government in the Finnish press.

Yet Hungary does not have to give up its efforts to create a positive image in Finland. A country brand is much more than the image of a country in day-by-day political news coverage. As the newly appointed Hungarian (female!) Minister of State for Cultural Diplomacy stated, "the easiest way to reach the opinion maker intellectuals of foreign countries (...) is through culture". She went on saying that "representation of culture abroad which is persistent, well-thought-out and consistent with economic and political processes, will eventually bring results". Moreover, "through culture (...) one may be able to contribute to the shaping of the country's relationships."²

This fits well into the Finnish approach: "Finnish education and culture are strong components of our country brand (...) With the rise of the creative industries, culture and business have come closer to each other."³ So, despite diverging political attitudes and partly different political agendas, there is a remarkable similarity in the way of thinking about the role culture has to play in external relations and in country branding. This provides us with some leeway in using culture when branding Hungary in Finland.

György Urkuti is currently the deputy chief of mission at the Embassy of Hungary in Helsinki, Finland, a post he has held since October, 2011. Beforehand, between June 2010 and July 2011, he served as head of Department for EU Presidency Communications in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary. He is a trained economist, graduating from the Budapest University of Economics (now Corvinus) in 1995. He earned his Ph.D degree in international relations at the same university in 2002. He was founding editor of EU section at Világgazdaság business daily newspaper in 1998 and worked as head of this section until April 2010. In 2003, he became head of international section there, maintaining his previous position as well. He has contributed as speaker and moderator at several conferences and training courses for journalists and other audience



There are strong foundations to build upon: Hungarian musicians, singers, writers, graphic artists and other representatives of Hungarian culture have an excellent reputation in Finland. Hungarians have even significantly contributed to the development of Finnish music life, for example, on more than a few occasions. Moreover, Hungarians in general have a remarkably good image in Finland, based on the Finno-Ugric language relationship, similar experiences of hardships in history and a large number of personal friendships. High quality gypsy and classical music, paprika, Rubik's cube, söroz⁴, the Sziget festival⁵, the Hungaroring Formula 1 race⁶ and many more symbols and institutions are widely known elements of the Hungarian culture in Finland. There are more than fifty Finnish-Hungarian twin town partnerships and the Finnish-Hungarian Society (an NGO for Hungary-lovers in Finland) also has local branches in more than fifty Finnish towns. Thematic weeks about Hungary are organized every fourth year in hundreds of Finnish schools. So, when promoting Hungarian culture, we can rely on the positive attitudes of the Finnish public about Hungary.

Based on the aforementioned facts, the Balassi Institute Hungarian Cultural and Scientific Centre (serving as the main platform and organizer for showcasing Hungarian culture throughout Finland) and the Embassy of Hungary have been able to organize more than a hundred successful cultural events yearly: exhibitions, concerts, movie screenings, literary evenings, seminars and so on. These events were hugely popular even in those years, when attacks (often politically motivated attacks) against the Hungarian Government peaked in the Finnish press, ie., in 2012 and 2013.

Hungary was the guest of honour at the popular Helsinki Book Fair in 2012, with no less than 13 new Finnish translations published from various Hungarian books that year. Hungarian Cultural Weeks have been organized in Pori, Tampere, Mikkeli and Järvenpää with many exhibitions, film screenings and other events. We celebrated both the start and the end of the Hungarian Presidency of the Visegrád Group cooperation with excellent free jazz concerts at the most well-known summer stage in Helsinki in 2013 and 2014. We commemorated the 70th anniversary of the Hungarian Holocaust with a concert featuring a brilliant piano piece written especially for this occasion by Helsinki-based Hungarian pianist and composer László Süle⁷. A Hungarian

musical was staged in one of the most prestigious theatres in Finland, the Svenska Teatern⁸. International Kodály Weeks, Hungarian folk dance education events, participating at the Artists' Night in Helsinki, Fenno-Ugric Restaurant Day, literally hundreds of film screenings, concerts, lectures, performances etc – there have been so many events that it is impossible to list even the most important ones. And while I am writing this, one of the largest contemporary art museums, Aboa Vetus et Ars Nova in Turku has an extensive exhibition of Hungarian artist Balázs Kicsiny on display, taking up both of the exhibit floors of the museum⁹.

Remarkably, excellent cooperation with Finnish partner institutions has not weakened at all in organizing all these events during these years. On the contrary, it has even strengthened. In my opinion, Hungarian cultural activity in Finland provides strong evidence that culture could be a valuable instrument in maintaining and even developing a positive image of a country even in times of diverging political attitudes, misunderstandings and, sometimes, politically motivated conflicts.

1 <http://www.hs.fi/ulkomaat/Unkaria+hallitsee+Orb%C3%A1nin+herrakerho/a1403406977257>. Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

2 <http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade/news/monika-balatoni-aim-is-to-create-a-favourable-image-of-the-country>. Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

3 <http://www.team.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=46802&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>. Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

4 Söröz⁴ is the Hungarian version of beer pubs. It is astonishing to see how widely this Hungarian word is known and celebrated in Finland!

5 One of the largest open air music festivals in Europe, the Sziget draws thousands of Finns each year.

6 The Hungarian Grand Prix has been won by Finnish drivers four times. The race is hugely popular with Finnish tourists, drawing thousands of Finnish supporters as tourists each year.

7 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=llyW5TXl72c&feature=youtu.be> Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

8 <http://www.svenskateatern.fi/ohjelmisto/ohjelmisto/djungelboken/> Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

9 <http://www.aboavetusarsnova.fi/en/exhibitions/balazs-kicsiny-no-news-from-nowhere> Retrieved on 29 June, 2014

The Arab Spring: learning to manage our expectations

By Gerald Butt

The Arab Spring thus far has taught us some important lessons. One of them is that we should beware of shorthand generalisations when we view and assess developments in the Middle East. Generalisations are alluring and convenient. But they are often misleading or wrong, resulting in a failure to manage expectations.

Take the most obvious example. The Arab uprisings that began in 2011 in Tunisia were characterized by those outside the Middle East as a pro-democracy movement, thus the 'Arab Spring' tag. But in fact the Arabs' willingness to risk their lives by taking to the streets in vast numbers sprang simply out of a desire to remove despotic and corrupt leaders who treated their citizens with contempt. The uprisings lacked leaders and political agendas. These were not, in essence, pro-democracy protests.

Another broadly accepted assumption is that the uprisings came out of nowhere, taking the world by surprise. This assumption is true up to a point; but it is also misleading. Our view in Europe before 2011 was that while many Arab states were lacking in democratic principles and practices, they functioned sufficiently to provide for the needs of their people. In Egypt, for example, during the years before the uprising, successive IMF reports spoke glowingly of economic improvements, with a programme of industrial privatisation making impressive headway, and so on.

But the reports told only part of the story. They did not point out that many of the public assets were being sold at discount prices to members of the ruling elite and their families – and that the population at large knew this. They also failed to mention that the poor were becoming poorer. During a visit to Cairo in 2007, stuck in a traffic jam amid a battered assembly of cars, minibuses and trucks, I had plenty of time to study a large advertising board attached high on a building at the end of the street. The advertisement was for one of the latest models from Mercedes Benz. "Make It Yours Today", said the slogan.

Viewed from the heavily polluted chaos and paralysis of the Cairo street, that slogan (in English only) seemed to be addressing people on another planet. In fact that is how the majority of Egyptians imagined the lives of the rich elite to be – so different were their two worlds. The world at Cairo street level seemed to bear little relationship to the optimistic IMF assessments. Mustafa al-Sayyid, a Cairo University economics professor, confirmed this impression: "The Egyptian people don't see any positive effects from the higher rate of economic growth, privatization, and so on. These reforms have not been reflected in the standard of living of the people. People are still suffering from the high cost of living, unemployment and poverty."

Warnings Signs Were There

Not only did many Arab commentators point to the wealth disparity and sense of despair among the growing number of poor people, but some warned that matters were coming dangerously to a head. Kuwaiti writer Ahmed al-Rubai visited several areas of North Africa in 2005 and was shocked by what he saw: "In many Arab towns it is like turning back the years – you feel that time has stopped: the same depressing streets and the same buildings in a state of collapse. Only the number of beggars at the traffic lights has increased. People everywhere are poor – as if it is their ultimate fate to be this way. They complain about corruption and the misuse of money. They awake to unemployment and go to sleep with hopelessness."

He concluded his article with something close to a premonition of what happened in 2011. "The social divide is getting wider," he wrote. "I will not hide from you the fact that I fear an explosion in these Arab towns. And if, God forbid, that should happen, then it would be bigger than we might expect and worse than we can imagine."

So the signs were there. Yet assessments like those of Ahmed Ribai apparently did not find their way into the dispatches sent by European ambassadors in the Middle East to their foreign ministry bosses. Too often, it seems, we rely on the opinions either of those close to power or experts who mirror our own views, giving us a distorted impression of reality. Europe's assessment of North Africa prior to 2011 was that the region was basically stable. But if our governments, instead of accepting bland official assurances that all was well, had been aware that millions of Arabs there "awake to unemployment and go to sleep with hopelessness" we might have been better prepared for the storm when it broke.

Hindrances To Democracy

While a yearning for democracy per se was not the chief motivator of the Arab uprisings, there was nonetheless an instinctive urge instinct was to fill the post-dictatorship vacuums with new constitutions promising genuine democratic choice, in contrast to the sham elections and referenda of the past. But as we know very well, the post-2011 path to democracy in the Arab world has not been smooth: the process of establishing new systems has encountered many of the same problems that also bedevil other Arab countries where elections are held regularly, like Algeria, Iraq Jordan and Morocco.

The circumstances in every Arab country are different, but all face to a certain degree the same hindrances to democracy:

- **Education.** Poor public-sector education focuses on rote learning, rather than questioning and analysis, producing adults who are ill-prepared for open political debate and the choices of the ballot box. The United Nations Development Program's 2009 Arab Knowledge Report highlighted "grave concerns over the state of education in the Arab world", where one third of the adult population is unable to read and write. High birth rates are compounding these problems.
- **Institutions.** Independent institutions to ensure fair governance are either weak or absent.
- **Media/public debate.** State-controlled media within individual countries still discourage open political debate, while private media outlets are usually strongly partisan. Debates tend to become shouting matches, with scant tolerance of differing views.
- **Political vision.** Secular political parties lack vision as well as organization, having been suppressed under dictatorial rule. Religious parties, by contrast, are well organized but have restricted appeal. Political groups as a whole fail to offer pragmatic and practical solutions to issues affecting daily life like economic problems and unemployment. Politics is driven by the personality and avarice of individuals rather than policies.
- **Traditional ruling elites.** Groups that have held power – whether dynasties and their beneficiaries, or the military – are reluctant to surrender it, even post-2011.
- **Sectarianism.** This encourages politicians to plunder what they can from the state for their own communities, rather than work for the good of the country as a whole. Sectarianism also strongly discourages voters' free choice and works against inclusive politics, consensus building and compromise.
- **Social/religious influences.** In conservative societies women are directed by male family members how to vote. Some religious leaders prohibit voting for secular candidates.

Limited Democratic Success

Some Arab states have had more success than others in overcoming these hindrances. Tunisia is far in the lead in this respect. Its institutions have proven to be robust throughout the turmoil of the revolution that ousted President Ben Ali and the aftermath. Even though the military brought the former president to power in 1987 it has not taken an active role in politics since his overthrow. Civil society played a significant role in encouraging members of the Constituent Assembly to overcome their wide differences to produce a document acceptable to most sections of society. The new constitution stipulates a mixed presidential-parliamentary system of government, with the president a powerful figure responsible for security, defence and foreign policy.

Egypt, by contrast, is beset by problems, including a clash between Islamists' and secularists' vision of the country's identity. The constitution has been rewritten twice since 2011, producing a political structure that first excluded the secular wing of society and now excludes the Muslim Brotherhood. Above all, the military continues to hold power and is enhancing the power of the police state, including enshrining in the new constitution the right of military courts to try civilians, and a new law imposing tight restrictions on protests.

Libya's first free elections in 2012 raised hopes of a peaceful transition to democratic rule. But the absence of either independent institutions or civil society has left the central authorities without broad public support, allowing militias to compete for control of different areas of the country and its economy. Flourishing democracy is a distant prospect.

Syria's presidential elections in June were held in conditions that were un conducive to a free democratic process. How many Syrians were able to vote under the prevailing war conditions was irrelevant: totalitarian rule meant that Bashar al-Assad's return to power with an overwhelming majority was a foregone conclusion.

Yemen successfully concluded its National Dialogue Conference earlier this year with an agreement that the country should become a federal state, even though southern secessionists and others oppose the arrangement. But poverty, a high birth rate and the lack of strong institutions will be among the barriers in the way of democracy.

Iraq's democratic process is crippled by sectarianism, hindering the creation of a social pact between the central authorities and the people, while encouraging regionalism. The army and security services, also increasingly tainted by sectarianism, have again become instruments of internal repression. In a society where each sect or ethnic group is competing for a slice of national influence and revenue, corruption thrives and erodes democratic principles. The recent Sunni surge led by the al-Qa'ida offshoot, Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) exposed the deep flaws in Iraq's political and social systems. Lebanon's political framework has long reflected the sectarian structure of that country. Democracy is complicated by the role of external actors: Syria and Iran supporting the Shia Hizbollah organization, and Saudi Arabia backing the Sunnis.

In the other Arab countries where elections are held, democratic institutions are inhibited by the veto powers of higher authorities: the army in the case of Algeria, and dynastic ruling families in Kuwait, Jordan and Morocco. Aside from Kuwait, the view of wealthy Arab Gulf states is that their societies have a mechanism in the form of the 'majlis', or open council, at which citizens have direct access to their rulers, which makes western-style democracy both unnecessary and inappropriate.

More Phases Of The Arab Spring

So different political systems have reacted in differing ways to the idea of democracy; there is no value in generalisations. European governments need to assess each Arab state on its own terms. But rather than ranking them in a league table of success or failure in the adoption of democracy they should ask whether the aspirations of the millions who took to the streets in Tunisia, Egypt and elsewhere have been met. The answer, again to a greater or lesser degree, is that they have not. The uprooting of dictatorships has not resulted in better lives for the majority of the populations, nor has it restored their self-esteem. But watch what is being written on Twitter and Facebook, listen to the people in the cafés and you will soon conclude that the fear factor has been erased. One phase of the Arab Spring may have passed, but others will follow if the new leaders cannot soon meet basic social and economic needs.

The short-term prospects are not promising. The Arab Middle East remains a region where politics in the European sense of the word has no traction. Nor will it until the impediments to democracy listed above are removed. Europe can help by offering education opportunities to young Arabs and showing them how politics can function and make a difference to all sections of society. They may or may not be tempted to emulate what they see in their own countries. For ultimately true Arab politics must emerge out of Arab society itself – and the process will vary from one country to another. To seek to generalise it would, as ever, be wrong.



Gerald Butt, a former BBC Middle East Correspondent, is a writer and broadcaster on the region and provider of political risk analysis to a number of European firms.

He was born and brought up in the Middle East and studied Arabic at university. He is the author of seven books on the region, the latest being *History in the Arab Skies: Aviation's Impact on the Middle East*.

Communicating with Europeans worldwide

Some reflections on the best ways ahead

By Niels Jørgen Thøgersen

Europeans are living and working all over the world. Some for a short time, others for a longer period and many for ever. Exact figures are not available. But a good guess – based on facts and calculations – is that about 80 mio. Europeans holding passports from one of the 28 EU member states are living in another country than the one they were born in. In our more and more globalised world this is a figure, which is increasing, not least for young Europeans. Of the 80 mio. altogether 14 mio. are living in another EU country than the one of their passport.

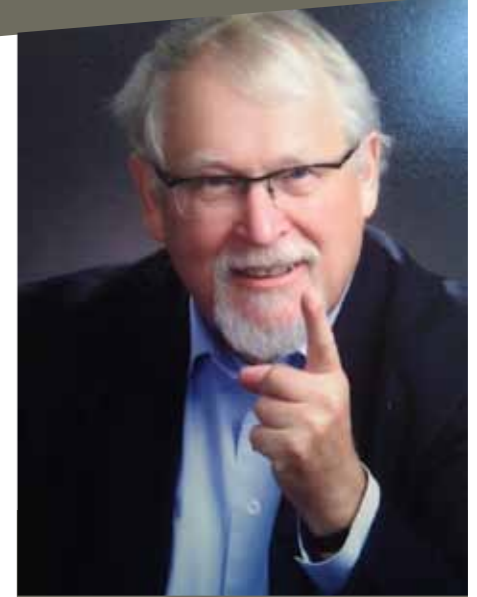
As president for the pan-European organisation Europeans Throughout the World (www.euromonde.eu) I am actively involved in working for all 80 mio. expatriats (expats). Among our main policies are: voting rights for all European expats; easier and more streamlined procedures around voting, including electronic registration and voting; possibility for dual citizenship for all expats; better consular protection of Europeans outside the EU; more awareness of the value of mobility and of expats; and a special effort to address the needs of young European expatriats.

Our member organizations in most European countries are all working for and with their citizens abroad. And our partner organisations and many individuals are using their networks for that purpose. As the European umbrella organization we do our best to make everybody work together and learn from best practices everywhere. Working together is winning together, is our motto. And we are in particular active on behalf of all to make Europe work better and harder for expats wherever they are. So much about the background.

Now to the very important question: How can we best communicate with 80 mio. citizens scattered all over the globe?

First of all, we must have a very clear and relevant message. What do we offer of importance to all expats? How can they profit from our work? How can they contribute to our common efforts? And how can they – wherever they live – work better with other European expats in these matters? It is evident that European citizens inside the EU have more fundamental rights wherever they are – due to the EU treaties. But the large majority of EU citizens outside Europe have other important rights and possibilities. They just have to know about them.

Another very important fact to make clear to everybody is that they can – if they want to – be very valuable “ambassadors” for their country of origin. Be it in business terms, culturally, linguistically and socially. Perhaps they haven't thought about it. Perhaps they do not know how. And perhaps their country of birth is not realizing the potentials of this opportunity.



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He is also 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.

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How to get that information across? And how to show and explain that it is a win-win situation for everybody, not least the expats themselves, if they invest some time and effort into knowing about and using the many possibilities coming from their European citizenship?

Organising expats in clubs and associations in the “old fashioned way” with annual membership fees and regular meetings, etc. belongs to a large extent to the past. It will perhaps mobilize “the usual suspects” – not the large majority of expats.

I see the following ways ahead when communicating with the Europeans worldwide is concerned:

1. Very focused and up-to-date social media (LinkedIn and in particular Facebook - and also Twitter for back-up). When resources are available they have to be in several languages. And a very active policy to encourage others to link up to our sites and to re-tweet our messages
2. Video communication via a special expat channel on YouTube with webinars, testimonials and small videos to explain new rights and developments (again in several languages)
3. Cooperation with a widely seen multilingual TV station (such as EURONEWS) with a regular magazine for expats. This can be seen on TV and on their website. And it will – in the case of EURONEWS – automatically appear in 14 languages
4. Cooperation with international radio stations of particular interest to expatriates in many languages
5. Contact to editors and journalists in international and national newspapers interested in the issue of expats and their special challenges and potentials
6. Close cooperation with organisations in direct contact with European expats such as chambers of commerce, cultural institutes and clubs and associations for expats
7. Development – also on European level – of expat Parliaments such as already used in countries like Sweden and Finland (informal regular meetings between expats from around the world and ministers and other political leaders). Such expat Parliaments could in the future also be virtual expat parliaments using all the new tools of the internet. Such events will become a very important source for spreading information and for interactivity with and between expats
8. Last, but not the least, governments, regional bodies and European institutions have an equally important role to play in this work. The 80 mio. EU citizens abroad can almost be seen as one of the very biggest member states of the EU (only Germany being bigger). Needles to say that their potential importance and democratic rights have to be taken seriously – not only in words, but certainly also in deeds and actions. Also in communication. Some European countries are already doing well in this challenge. May they give a positive and convincing inspiration for all the others.



Provisional programme 2014-2016

2014	
Brussels, 21 February 2014	Seminar on Digital Communication Trends
Athens, 27-28 March 2014	Seminar on “Public Communication: Regaining citizens’ confidence in times of crisis”
Riga, 5/6 June 2014	Plenary meeting
Rome, 13/14 November 2014	Plenary meeting
2015	
Brussels, February/March 2015 (tbc)	Seminar on Digital Communication
Vienna, 11-12 June 2015	Plenary meeting
Brussels, October 2015 (tbc)	Seminar + preparation plenary meeting
Venice, November 2015 (dates to be defined)	Plenary meeting
2016	
February/March 2016 (tbc)	Thematic seminar
The Hague, May 2016	Plenary meeting
October 2016 (tbc)	Seminar + preparation of the plenary meeting
Venice, November 2016	Plenary meeting

The Club expresses its gratitude to its members from Belgium, France, Italy, Latvia,
The Netherlands, Poland, the United Kingdom,
the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee of the Club,
the Members Emeriti, the Committee of the Regions, the Riga2014 Office,
the Swedish Agency for Youth and Civil Society,
the Centre for European Policy Studies and the Mercator Foundation.

Many thanks also to the pro-active support from Mayte Peters, Gerald Butt,
György Urkuti, Anthony Zacharzewski, Zigurds Zakis
and all our others 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.

