

# convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe



## FOCUS ON:

### VIENNA plenary meeting (June 2015)

- Crisis communication
- Counter-Terrorism:  
building joint communication strategies
- TTIP

### SOFIA conference (March 2015)

- Digital challenges
- StratCom synergies
- Citizens' involvement

### Communicating Europe

- The quest for a lost dialogue
- Democratic issues at stake
  - Advocating Europe
- Communication on development policies:  
keeping the "momentum"



# SUMMARY



Introduction - Editorial	3
<b>Sofia conference “Digital Communication: New Challenges for Governments and EU Institutions” (March 2015)</b>	
Joint effort, shared success	6
Governments online: citizens' dialogue and Europe's values	10
Communication of values	14
Address by Minister Daniel Mitov	16
Fostering participation and partnership	18
Case study on Twitter: the International Mother Language Day in Bulgaria	19
Recipe for a successful dialogue with citizens	24
The digital art of conversation	26
Stratcom - Where do we stand	28
Social media as tool of Russia's influence activities	30
Five points of alignment between China and Russia	33
Promotion of European values in a digital world	34
Serbian citizens' support to EU membership	35
midwives4all, MFA Sweden	37
<b>Vienna plenary meeting of the Club of Venice (June 2015)</b>	
Security, Crisis Management and Transatlantic Trade and Investments	40
Déclaration d'ouverture	44
Mothers: The Key Security Ally	46
Countering Violent Extremism and De-Radicalization	52
Panel on counterterrorism	53
EU Integrated Political Crisis Response	54
Twenty years of Austrian Membership in the EU	57
Workshop on Communicating TTIP	59
<b>Communicating in/on Europe</b>	
“Adventures in Government”: Ethics in Communication	62
Enterprise for All through partnership	65
Mobile application “Football”	68
The Crowd is the Future	70
Communicating without Dialogue	73
What are the democratic issues at stake for European communication?	75
Why is the EU communication strategy inaudible?	77
Towards a more effective development policy	78
The role of social media in Dutch public administration's communication	80
Facebook Politics & Government	85
EUROPCOM 2015	87
<b>CLUB NEWS</b>	
Updated calendar of Club events (2015-2018)	89
Next plenary meeting of the Club (Milano, October 2015)	90
Acknowledgments	94



Les textes n'engagent que la responsabilité de leurs auteurs.  
Ils peuvent être reproduits avec mention des sources.

The textes are the sole responsibility of their authors.  
They may be reproduced provided that the source is acknowledged.

# C'est grave ...

Par Philippe Caroyez et Vincenzo Le Voci

On aura beaucoup glosé sur la définition de la « communication publique » ou, plus généralement, sur ce qui la caractériserait en la distinguant d'« autres champs (ou formes) de communication ». C'est une démarche qui n'est toutefois pas que scolaire et qui accompagne la fondation d'une « discipline » (qui s'autonomise), son statut (fluctuant), son exercice professionnel (évolutif) et la réflexion sur l'ensemble de ces éléments.

Sans avoir la prétention d'apporter une pierre à cet édifice, il est une caractéristique distinctive de la communication publique qui n'a pas été mise en avant : elle est « grave ». Non pas que son ton (ou sa forme) doive l'être nécessairement, mais bien parce que sa nature (étatique) et son objet l'imposent forcément à ceux qui (à différents égards) en ont la charge et la responsabilité.

De la naissance du Club de Venise à aujourd'hui, les expériences et les actions de communication échangées entre membres ne l'ont jamais contredit : de la gravité d'un choix d'intégration européenne à la gravité du non-emploi ou des accidents de la route, en passant par les problèmes lourds de santé publique ou de violences urbaines ... même les actions de communication publique événementielles (qui peuvent être festives) sont évocatrices, commémoratives ou mémorielles et empreintes de cette gravité.

Cette gravité essentielle de la communication publique ne croit pas en soi, mais la gravité des situations par rapport auxquelles les communicateurs publics doivent concevoir et mener leurs actions semble s'amplifier à m'en plus finir dans une sorte d'accélération de l'agitation du monde

Les difficultés économiques rencontrées par la Grèce et d'autres pays (trop vite oubliés), la crise ukrainienne et l'instabilité dans la région, les euphémiquement dits « mouvements migratoires » et leurs drames humanitaires insupportables et incessants, les menaces et actions terroristes intérieures et extérieures et leur suite de radicalisation sont autant de situations problématiques auxquelles sont confrontés actuellement nos états et l'Union européenne. Leur caractère et leur enchaînement sont à ce point inédits et dramatiques qu'elles laissent une impression d'absence de prise sur les faits et d'impuissance de l'action publique, qui n'en rend l'action des communicateurs publics que plus délicate et difficile.

A Sofia, lors de la conférence que le Club organisait en mars 2015, conjointement avec la Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, le Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies et SEECOM Association, sur le thème « La communication digitale : nouveaux défis pour les gouvernements et les institutions européennes », les interventions ont vite fait de basculer d'une certaine légèreté - que procure toujours l'enthousiasme né de l'introduction de (nouveaux) moyens de communication (multiplication des médias dits « sociaux », promesse d'interactions et d'une plus grande participation voire de l'ouverture d'un « débat public », si pas surenchère de tweets ou course aux followers) - à la gravité de leurs détournements et dérives dans des contextes conflictuels (appel à la

radicalisation, désinformation, propagande, ...). Situait ainsi le débat entre la grande opportunité qu'offrent la communication digitale aux communicateurs publics et la grande vigilance et la maîtrise dont ils doivent faire preuve en la matière.

Ce débat a pu se poursuivre à Vienne, lors de la réunion plénière du Club les 11 et 12 juin 2015, où ont été abordés les thèmes d'actualité suivants : sécurité, gestion de crise et TTIP.

Dans tous les cas, il s'agit (à l'idéal) d'informer au mieux nos citoyens et la société civile pour en faire les acteurs avertis et critiques d'une conversation entre eux et entre eux et les autorités publiques, tout en créant et défendant les conditions de cette conversation fondées sur les valeurs de la démocratie et les droits humains.

Nous en rendons compte dans ces pages.

\*\*\*

Dans un plaidoyer *pro domo*, nous retournant sur ce qui caractériserait la communication publique, nous aurions pu nous risquer à avancer qu'elle est la seule publicité qui soit (socialement) « nécessaire », mais elle ne l'est pas en soi. Ce sont les communicateurs publics qui doivent faire en sorte qu'elle le soit, en indiquant en quoi elle va l'être et en démontrant qu'elle l'a été pour l'action publique et les citoyens ... ce qui constitue une autre condition de sa « gravité ».

3



Vienna



# It's serious...

By Philippe Caroyez and Vincenzo Le Voci

The definition of public communication has been the subject of much debate. In particular, a lot has been said about the characteristics that distinguish it from other fields (or forms) of communication. The approach is not solely scholastic in nature. It is the first step in creating a discipline (which becomes autonomous), its status (in flux), its professional use (evolving) and the reflection on all of the above.

While we do not claim to add anything to this debate, there is one distinctive characteristic of public communication that has not been mentioned: it is "serious". Not that its tone (or form) need necessarily be serious, but rather because its nature (emanating from the State) and its purpose require a level of seriousness from those who (in various ways) are tasked with and are responsible for it.

4 From the creation of the Club of Venice to the present day, the experience and communication activities shared by its members have not contradicted this argument: there was the serious choice in favour of European integration, the serious matters of non-employment and road accidents, serious public health problems and urban violence ... even event-specific public communication (that may be festive) are evocative or commemorative and carry the same level of seriousness.

This essential seriousness of public communication is intrinsic to its very nature and invariable, whereas the situations facing public communicators and about which they are to communicate are becoming increasingly serious, in a world that is becoming more and more agitated.

The economic difficulties experienced by Greece and other countries (too quickly forgotten), the Ukrainian crisis and instability in the region, what is euphemistically called "migration" and its incessant and unbearable humanitarian tragedies, domestic and international terror threats and attacks leading to radicalisation; these are just a few of the problematic situations currently facing our states and the European Union. These events are so unprecedented and dramatic, both in terms of their nature and concatenation, as to create an impression of unresponsiveness to these events and of powerless public authorities, making public communications all the more tricky and difficult.

At the Club's Sofia conference in March 2015, organised together with the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies and SEECOM Association, on the topic of "Digital communication: new challenges for governments and the European institutions", the speakers' interventions soon moved from a lighter tone - the kind that is always enthusiastically received because of their use of new means of communication (increased reliance on social media, promises of more interaction and broader participation and even a public debate, and of course many tweets and races to get the most followers) - to the serious matter of the misuse and abuse of communication in conflict situations (calls for radicalisation, misinformation, propaganda, etc.). The discussion therefore turned to the

great opportunities provided by digital communication to public communicators and the latter's need to be vigilant and to master these means of communication.

Discussions continued in Vienna, during the Club's plenary session of 11 and 12 June 2015, with the following topical issues being addressed: security, crisis management and TTIP.

In any case, ideally, our citizens and civil society should be provided with accurate information in as timely a manner as possible in order to make them savvy and critical stakeholders in discussions among themselves and with the public authorities. At the same time, this creates and bolsters the pre-conditions for holding such discussions, which need to be founded on the values of democracy and human rights.

The contributions in the next pages will bear witness to this.

\*\*\*

In a *pro domo* argument, if we were to re-examine the specific characteristics of public communication, we could even argue that it is the only form of publicity that is (socially) necessary, even though it is not necessary in and of itself. Public communicators must ensure that their communication becomes socially necessary, by indicating how and why it is necessary and by demonstrating its necessity for public action and to citizens. This is another condition of its "seriousness".

*Editorial note: the original text is in French.*



Sofia

# **Echoes from the joint conference « Digital Communication: New Challenges for Governments and EU Institutions »».**

**Sofia, March 2015**



# Sofia conference “Digital Communication: New Challenges for Governments and EU Institutions”, 27 March 2015 : joint effort, shared success

By Vincenzo Le Voci

The Club of Venice convened in Sofia for the 2nd time, three years after its seminar on crisis communication hosted by the Bulgarian MFA.



The event was a joint initiative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Martens Centre for European Studies and the SEECOM Association who were closely co-operating in the organization of the debate. The conference was held in presence of governmental communication specialists from EU Member States, candidate countries and association countries as well as of the main institutions and bodies (EP, Council, Commission, EEAS and EESC), NATO and European Council on Foreign Relations. We were also honored by two welcome speeches from the Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs Daniel Mitov and from the German Ambassador to Bulgaria Detlef Lingemann.

The Club has always been confronted with the increasing role of technology. Sofia's meeting was a great chance to compare different digital experiences applied to specific communication priorities: citizen's involvement and participation in the democratic and decision-making process, on-line information and interaction in times of geopolitical conflicts, and the capacity to share EU's values on-line.

6





Panelists and audience were deeply engaged in discussing the above issues. In this field we need to reduce distances and facilitate organizational processes in order to listen to the citizens' demands and to provide adequate services responding to their expectations.

I welcomed the participants on behalf of the President of the Club Stefano Rolando, reminding them that the technological factor obliges us to continuous and sometimes far-reaching adaptations of our organizational models. It eliminates functions and also creates new tasks. It puts in archives some knowledge but also generates new knowledge.

As Stefano asked me to share with the audience, this process happens quickly and reminds all of us of its close relations with the management of institutional responsibilities.

As a matter of fact, today it is widely recognized that, on average, every three years the knowledge acquired in the field of communication should be considered outdated and old-fashioned. This trend is caused to 75% by technological develop-

ment. This phenomenon creates an imbalance in public organizations between competent and incompetent staff, that it is not always easy to make compatible with careers' development and with the question of "internal power". Accordingly, universities and training centers must frequently review their theoretical and methodological approach and teaching materials.

Digital communication fosters the culture of interaction and helps setting new relationship models for participation and for efficient reaction to the propaganda approach. This is why the Club feels this phenomenon has a strong impact on the future of public communication, having regard particularly to the great responsibility towards citizens.

Many thanks to Christian Spahr for his excellent summary of the debate, which we are reproducing here below. Definitely a lot of food for thought in view of future Club meetings!

7





## Conference – Friday, 27 March 2015

09:00 – 09:30	<b>Welcome Coffee, Registration</b>   Sheraton Sofia Hotel Balkan, Hall "Serdika"	
09:30 – 10:00	<b>Opening Speeches</b>	
	<b>Christian Spahr</b>	Head of the Media Program South East Europe, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Sofia
	<b>Stefano Rolando</b>	President of the Club of Venice; Professor of Public Communication, University of Milan
	<b>Ognian Zlatev</b>	SEECOM Chairman; Head of the EC Representation in Bulgaria, Sofia
10:00 – 10:15	<b>Welcome Address by Detlef Lingemann</b> German Ambassador to Bulgaria, Sofia	
10:15 – 10:45	<b>Keynote Address by Daniel Mitov</b> Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria	
10:45 – 11:15	<b>Coffee break</b>	
11:15 – 12:45	<b>Panel I: Encouraging citizen participation with online tools</b> <i>Best practices of governments, parliaments and EU for a better dialogue</i>	
<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Erik den Hoedt</b>	Director, Public Information/Comm. Office, Ministry of General Affairs, The Netherlands
<b>Keynote</b>	<b>Georg Streiter</b>	Deputy Government Spokesperson, Germany, Berlin
<b>Panelists</b>	<b>Aleksandra Atanasova</b>	Social Media Community Manager, European Commission Representation in Bulgaria, Sofia
	<b>Magdalena Kudlicka</b>	Head of EU Unit, Dep. of Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Warsaw
	<b>Thibault Lesenecal</b>	Acting Head of Web Communication Unit, European Parliament DG COMM, Brussels
	<b>Vuk Vujnović</b>	SEECOM Secretary General; Public Affairs Specialist, Mission of Montenegro to the EU
<b>Q &amp; A with the audience   Possible remarks by:</b> Arban Abrashi (Kosovo), Marija Goranović (Montenegro), Daniel Reichert (Germany)		





14:00 – 15:30	<b>Panel II: Geopolitical conflicts – the role of governments on the Web</b> <i>Example Ukraine: Truth and objectivity as challenges in the information provision</i>	
<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Christian Spahr</b>	Head of the Media Program South East Europe, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Sofia
<b>Keynote</b>	<b>Sanda Svetoka</b>	Senior Expert, Centre of Excellence, NATO Stratcom Latvia, Riga
<b>Panelists</b>	<b>Matteo Arisci</b>	Information and Communication Officer, European External Action Service, Brussels
	<b>Dmytro Kuleba</b>	Ambassador-at-Large for Strategic Comm., Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine, Kiev
	<b>Žana Tarasevič</b>	Head of Public Information Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, Vilnius
	<b>Taavi Toom</b>	Director General, Dept. of Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, Tallinn
<b>Q &amp; A with the audience   Possible remarks by:</b> Nebojša Regoje (BiH), Krunoslav Vidić (Croatia), and others		
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Coffee break</b>	
16:00 – 17:30	<b>Panel III: Promotion of European values in a digital world</b> <i>EU communications, challenged by competing political models</i>	
<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Vincenzo Le Voci</b>	Secretary-General of the Club of Venice; Administrator Press/Comm., Council of the EU
<b>Keynote</b>	<b>Ivana Đurić</b>	Assistant Director of European Integration Office, Government of Serbia, Belgrade
<b>Panelists</b>	<b>Robert Andrecs</b>	Head of the "Europa" website, DG COMM, European Commission, Brussels
	<b>Jens Paulus</b>	Head of Team Europe and North America, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Berlin
	<b>Vessela Tcherneva</b>	Programme Director, European Council on Foreign Relations, London
	<b>Dinka Živalj</b>	Chief Advisor to the Minister of Regional Dev. and EU Funds; SEECOM co-founder; Croatia
<b>Q &amp; A with the audience   Possible remarks by:</b> Kent Öberg (Sweden), Stefan Vukotić (Montenegro), and others		
17:30 – 17:45	<b>Planning and Announcements 2015-2016:</b> Vincenzo Le Voci, Sec.-Gen. Club of Venice   Vuk Vujnović, Sec. Gen. SEECOM	
17:45 – 18:15	<b>Closing remarks:</b> Ognian Zlatev (SEECOM), Ioana Lung (Communications Officer, WMCES), Stefano Rolando (CoV), Oliver Vujović (Secretary General, South East Europe Media Organisation), Jens Paulus, Christian Spahr (KAS)	



# EVENT REPORT

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V

**MEDIA PROGRAM**  
**SOUTH EAST EUROPE**  
CHRISTIAN SPAHR

March 2015

[www.kas.de/medien-europa/en](http://www.kas.de/medien-europa/en)

## Governments online: Citizens' Dialogue and Europe's Values

KAS CONFERENCE OF SPOKESPERSONS OF EU INSTITUTIONS AND NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS ON COMMUNICATION WITH CITIZENS AND EUROPEAN VALUES

**80 leading PR experts of state institutions from 25 countries met in Sofia on 26th and 27th March at the invitation of the KAS Media Program South East Europe. The Conference on Digital Communication received high level political support and was held in co-operation with the "Club of Venice" and the "Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies" (Brussels). Top of the agenda was defence of European values on the Web.**

Traditional media are losing audience. Exchange of information on the Web is booming. Heads of government communications in the whole of Europe must face this challenge. For a long time news portals have no longer been the only sources of political information on the Internet, Facebook und Twitter are replacing or supplementing professional journalism. Those who want to enter into dialogue with the public must communicate asymmetrically through many channels.

This is an enormous task in two respects: citizens increasingly expect to contribute opinions and ideas in political opinion-making. But the European model is also under attack from political actors who do not share its goals and values. Political conflict takes place around the clock on global platforms.

"We are simply taking the values of the EU for granted," was the criticism of the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Daniel Mitov in his address at the beginning of the conference. "We must explain the EU better

and start defending it", said the Foreign Minister, with regard to Russian action in Ukraine and extremist parties inside Europe. "Our European communication has to become more strategic in nature." The German Ambassador Detlef Lingemann emphasised the importance of citizen involvement and value orientation as aspects of digital communication by governments. Democratic values like freedom and the rule of law and universal human rights were in need of protection.

More than 20 contributors to the conference discussed these themes in detail. A succession of three panel discussions considered examples of good practice in online-dialogue with citizens, the war of information in the Ukraine crisis, and new approaches to the explanation of European values in the world.

### **Feeding the trolls or not? – The new Facebook page of the German Government**

Erik den Hoedt began by saying that social media were a great way to improve communication with citizens. The director of the Public Information and Communication Office of the Netherlands chaired the Panel on citizen participation. A new approach to this was presented by Keynote speaker Georg Streiter, Deputy Spokesperson of the German Government. This is newly also represented on Facebook and manages citizens' comments in an unorthodox way. Impertinent criticism from Internet users is not ignored but is answered by a 15-strong team with humour and in unofficial

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

**MEDIA PROGRAM  
SOUTH EAST EUROPE**  
CHRISTIAN SPAHR

**March 2015**

[www.kas.de/medien-europa/en](http://www.kas.de/medien-europa/en)

language. "It is generally said, don't feed the trolls - but we do, in our own manner," explained Streiter. This prevents arguments from escalating and preserves the basis for serious contributions.

Thibault Lesenecal, head of online communication of the European Parliament, impressed on participants: "If people are talking about your institution, you must join in." It was also important to accept that you can lose control in social media. Those responsible for PR should also explain this to their bosses. Lack of resources for online communication and lack of knowledge within the public authorities were still a problem in many parts of South East Europe, said Vuk Vujnović, Public Affairs Specialist of the Government of Montenegro and Secretary General of SEECOM. This professional association for government spokespersons from South East Europe founded in 2013 was another of the joint organisers of the conference in Sofia.

#### **Kremlin propaganda and EU reactions: Ukraine as touch-stone for political PR**

The way in which geopolitical crises are creating a new kind of propaganda and information war was the subject of the second expert panel, chaired by Christian Spahr, Head of the Media Program South East Europe. He discussed, with five experts from Brussels, Kiev and the Baltic countries, the conflict of narratives concerning Ukraine. A central question was whether the EU needs counter-propaganda in competition with the Kremlin. Sanda Svetoka of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga first presented a detailed analysis of Russian social media strategy. "Traditional and social media as well as multimedia platforms and armies of trolls are being applied in a coordinated manner," was Svetoka's conclusion. According to experts, Moscow is investing hundreds of millions of Euro annually for this purpose. "We need a counter-strategy that is not itself propagandistic", claimed Matteo Arisci of the European External Action Service in the discussion. He described the launch of a new task force at the EEAS as decided

recently by the Foreign Affairs Council. Dmytro Kuleba from the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry also emphasised: "We must react but we must not betray our own standards and values". Speakers from Lithuania and Estonia argued that the EU should also provide information aimed at Russian-speaking citizens in Ukraine and the Baltics.

#### **Experts ask for clear messages and integrated narratives of the EU**

"The EU needs a clearer message" – this expectation was highlighted in the third Panel, led by Vincenzo Le Voci from the Club of Venice. This expert body, made up mainly of EU heads of communications and spokespersons of foreign ministries, was a partner for the first time of the KAS Media Program in organising the conference. "A priority for the EU is to develop integrated narratives", said Robert Andrecs, head of the online communication of the Commission. Clear messages are needed, which the public can relate to. Jens Paulus, Head of Team Europe and North America of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, urged the PR experts to respond to the challenge from political opponents to the EU model and be more resolute in support of European values. Survey results from Serbia showed that the image of the EU particularly in South East Europe is not always the best: Although the EU is by far the largest financial contributor to the country, the majority of the population believes this to be Russia. But Russia in fact provides no financial development assistance for Serbia, according to the expert contributor Ivana Đurić of the EU Integration Office of the Serbian government.

The Media Program South East Europe of KAS and the SEECOM association will be holding another conference this year on questions of European political communication: The SEECOM annual conference is planned for September, also in Sofia. Cooperation with the Club of Venice and with the Wilfried Martens Centre should also be further developed on the basis of positive feedback from conference participants.

Collaboration: Manuela Zlateva



#### **Imprint**

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung  
Media Program  
South East Europe

19, Yanko Sakazov Blvd.  
1st floor, apt. 2  
1504 Sofia  
Bulgaria

Telephone  
+359 2 942 49-71  
Telefax  
+359 2 942 49-79

E-Mail  
[media.europe@kas.de](mailto:media.europe@kas.de)

Web  
[www.kas.de/medien-europa](http://www.kas.de/medien-europa)



## Regierungen im Web: Mit Bürgern reden, Europas Werte verteidigen

KAS-KONFERENZ DER SPRECHER VON EU-INSTITUTIONEN UND NATIONALEN REGIERUNGEN ZU BÜRGERDIALOG UND KOMMUNIKATION EUROPÄISCHER WERTE

**80 führende PR-Experten staatlicher Institutionen aus 25 Ländern kamen auf Einladung des KAS-Medienprogramms Südosteuropa am 26. und 27. März in Sofia zusammen. Die politisch hochrangig begleitete Konferenz zu Digitaler Kommunikation fand in Kooperation mit dem „Club of Venice“ und dem „Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies“ (Brüssel) statt. Top-Thema war die Verteidigung europäischer Werte im Web.**

Traditionelle Medien verlieren Leser und Zuschauer, der Informationsaustausch im Web boomt: Dieser Herausforderung müssen sich Kommunikationschefs von Regierungen in ganz Europa stellen. Auch dienen im Internet längst nicht mehr nur Nachrichtenportale als Quellen für politische Informationen; Facebook und Twitter ersetzen oder ergänzen den professionellen Journalismus. Wer mit den Bürgern in einen Dialog treten will, muss asymmetrisch auf vielen Kanälen kommunizieren.

Das ist in zweierlei Hinsicht eine umfangreiche Aufgabe: Zum einen steigen die Erwartungen der Bürger, Ansichten und Ideen in die politische Meinungsbildung einzubringen. Das europäische Modell steht aber auch unter Beschuss von politischen Akteuren, die seine Ziele und Werte nicht teilen. Der politische Wettstreit findet rund um die Uhr auf globalen Plattformen statt.

„Wir halten die Werte der EU schon für selbstverständlich“, kritisierte der bulgarische Außenminister Daniel Mitov in seiner Ansprache zu Beginn der Konferenz.

„Wir müssen die EU besser erklären und beginnen, sie zu verteidigen“, sagte der Chefdiplomat mit Blick auf das russische Vorgehen in der Ukraine und extremistische Parteien innerhalb Europas. „Unsere europäische Kommunikation muss strategischer werden.“ Der deutsche Botschafter Detlef Lingemann unterstrich, dass Bürgerbeteiligung und Werteorientierung wichtige Aspekte digitaler Kommunikation von Regierungen sind. Demokratische Werte wie Freiheit und Rechtsstaatlichkeit sowie allgemeine Menschenrechte müssten geschützt werden.

Diese Aufforderungen konnten die mehr als 20 Redner der Konferenz wörtlich nehmen. In drei Podiumsdiskussionen ging es um gute Beispiele für den Online-Dialog mit Bürgern, um den Informationskrieg in der Ukraine-Krise und um neue Ansätze zur Erklärung europäischer Werte in der Welt.

### Trolle füttern oder nicht?

#### Neue Facebook-Seite der Bundesregierung

Soziale Medien seien ein hervorragendes Instrument, die Kommunikation mit den Bürgern zu verbessern, sagte eingangs Erik den Hoedt. Der Kommunikationschef der niederländischen Regierung moderierte das Panel zum Thema Bürgerdialog. Einen neuen Ansatz dazu präsentierte Keynote-Sprecher Georg Streiter, Stellvertretender Sprecher der deutschen Bundesregierung. Diese ist seit kurzem auch auf Facebook vertreten und managt Bürgerkommentare auf unorthodoxe Weise. Unsachliche Kritik von Internetnutzern wird dabei nicht

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.

**MEDIENPROGRAMM**  
**SÜDOSTEUROPA**  
CHRISTIAN SPAHR

März 2015

[www.kas.de/medien-europa](http://www.kas.de/medien-europa)

ignoriert, sondern von einem 15-köpfigen Team mit Humor und in inoffiziellm Ton beantwortet. „Überall heißt es, füttert nicht die Trolle – aber wir machen es, auf unsere Weise“, erklärt Streiter. So gelingt es, Debatten nicht eskalieren zu lassen und die Basis für ernsthafte Beiträge zu erhalten.

Thibault Lesenecal, Leiter der Online-Kommunikation des Europäischen Parlaments, schärfte den Teilnehmern ein: „Wenn die Leute über Ihre Institution reden, müssen Sie sich beteiligen.“ Es sei auch wichtig zu akzeptieren, dass man in sozialen Medien die Kontrolle verlieren kann. Dies müssten PR-Verantwortliche auch ihren Vorgesetzten erklären. Fehlende Ressourcen für die Online-Kommunikation und unzureichende Kenntnisse in den Behörden seien vielerorts in Südosteuropa noch ein Problem, sagte Vuk Vujnović, Public-Affairs-Experte der Regierung von Montenegro und Generalsekretär von SEECOM. Der 2013 gegründete Berufsverband für Regierungssprecher aus Südosteuropa war ein weiterer Mitausrichter der Sofioter Konferenz.

#### **Kreml-Propaganda und EU-Reaktionen: Die Ukraine als Prüfstein für politische PR**

Wie geopolitische Krisen für eine neue Art von Propaganda und Informationskrieg sorgen, war Thema des zweiten Fachpanels, moderiert von Christian Spahr, Leiter des KAS-Medienprogramms Südosteuropa. Er diskutierte mit fünf Experten aus Brüssel, Kiew und dem Baltikum den Konflikt der Narrativen rund um die Ukraine. Zentrale Frage war, ob die EU im Wettbewerb mit dem Kreml eine Gegenpropaganda braucht. Zunächst stellte Sanda Svetoka vom Nato-Zentrum für strategische Kommunikation in Riga eine detaillierte Analyse der russischen Social-Media-Strategie vor. „Traditionelle und soziale Medien sowie Multimedia-Plattformen und Troll-Armeen werden koordiniert eingesetzt“, so Svetokas Fazit. Experten zufolge investiert Moskau hunderte Millionen Euro jährlich dafür. „Wir brauchen eine Gegenstrategie, die aber selbst nicht propagandistisch ist“, forderte Matteo Arisci vom Europäischen Auswärtigen Dienst in der Diskussion. Er kündigte den Einsatz einer neuen Task

Force seiner Behörde an. „Wir müssen reagieren, dürfen aber unsere eigenen Standards und Werte nicht verraten“, unterstrich auch Dmytro Kuleba, der das ukrainische Außenministerium vertrat. Redner aus Litauen und Estland erklärten, die EU müsse auch Informationsangebote für russischsprachige Bürger in der Ukraine und den baltischen Ländern bereitstellen.

#### **Experten fordern klare Botschaften und ganzheitliche Kommunikation der EU**

„Die EU braucht eine klarere Botschaft“ – diese Erwartung war auch im dritten Panel zu hören, das Vincenzo Le Voci vom Club of Venice leitete. Das Expertengremium, dem vor allem EU-Kommunikationschefs und Sprecher der Außenministerien angehören, war erstmals ein Veranstaltungspartner des KAS-Medienprogramms. „Eine Priorität für die EU ist, zusammenhängende Narrative zu entwickeln“, sagte Robert Andrecs, Leiter der Online-Kommunikation der Kommission. Es brauche klare Botschaften, die für die Bürger verständlich seien. Jens Paulus, Teamleiter Europa und Nordamerika bei der Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, forderte die PR-Experten auf, die Herausforderung durch politische Gegner des EU-Modells anzunehmen und selbstbewusster für europäische Werte einzutreten. Dass es um das Bild der EU gerade in Südosteuropa nicht immer zum Besten steht, zeigten Umfrageergebnisse aus Serbien: Obwohl die EU mit großem Abstand der größte Geldgeber des Landes ist, glaubt die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung, dies sei Russland. Russland aber leiste de facto keine Entwicklungshilfe für Serbien, so die Expertin Ivana Đurić vom EU-Integrationsbüro der serbischen Regierung.

Das Medienprogramm Südosteuropa und der von der KAS mitgegründete SEECOM-Verband werden dieses Jahr noch ein zweites Mal über europäische PR-Fragen debattieren: Für September ist ebenfalls in Sofia die SEECOM-Jahreskonferenz geplant. Die Zusammenarbeit sowohl mit dem Club of Venice als auch dem Wilfried Martens Centre soll aufgrund vieler positiver Rückmeldungen der Konferenzteilnehmer weiter ausgebaut werden.

Mitarbeit: Manuela Zlateva



#### **Impressum**

Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung e.V.  
Medienprogramm Südosteuropa

Bul. Yanko Sakazov 19  
Et. 1, Ap. 2  
1504 Sofia  
Bulgarien

Telefon  
+359 2 942 49-71  
Telefax  
+359 2 942 49-79  
E-Mail

[media.europe@kas.de](mailto:media.europe@kas.de)

Web

[www.kas.de/medien-europa](http://www.kas.de/medien-europa)

# Communication of values

By Christian Spahr

Dear Minister Mitov,

Dear Minister Abrashi,

Dear Ambassadors,

Dear Vincenzo,

Dear colleagues and friends,

A very warm welcome to Sofia and to this conference which is merging so many aspects of our profession: It connects digital work and life with our passion for Europe and modern political communication. It brings 80 leading experts from all regions of the continent together – Western, Central, Eastern, Southern and South East Europe. And, last but not least, it interconnects different think tanks and professional organisations that support a professional and ethical communication of politics. Dear Vincenzo, it is a pleasure for us to host this conference together with the Club of Venice.

The Club of Venice has become a great partner, both, for the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung and for the co-host of this event, the South East European communication association SEECOM. As a guest speaker at your conferences, Vincenzo, I could see that our organisations pursue a common goal: More transparency and citizen orientation in government communication, constant improvement of methods for public participation, and a more successful storytelling for the European Union and its values.



Besides that, our joint efforts enable an exchange between our memberships: On one hand – the Communication directors of the EU and Foreign Ministries who gather in the Club of Venice. On the other hand – the Public Sector spokespersons from new EU member states and candidate countries who cooperate with SEECOM and the KAS Media Program. Furthermore, we have invited a few colleagues from political parties in our region, because we believe that a modern, dialogue-oriented understanding of communication is crucial to them as well.

I am glad that we have another strong partner on board today, the Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies. It is a Brussels-based think tank which shares the values of KAS and has been an authentic partner for many years. The Wilfried Martens Centre is represented here by its Communication Officer Ioana Lung. Ioana, thank you for your support.

In this conference, we will talk about some of the newest strategies for a dialogue with citizens. Even more intensively, we will discuss whether the EU and its member states have clear messages in the current worldwide competition of political models and values. Doubts on that are more than allowed. For many of us, the democratic model is something established. We have learned to treasure it. But many are no longer aware of how the institutions actually work and how one can participate in democratic decision-making.



Particularly younger EU citizens, the so called "digital natives", no longer have experience of war and lack of freedom. Therefore, the advantages of an open society are constantly in need of explanation. Moreover, representative democracy is a complex issue: It has to consider the interests of many different stakeholders. By nature, authoritarian regimes have simpler and more emotional messages. We need to think how to reply to their messages – in a world which is globally connected by the Internet, but less and less stable and peaceful in many regions.

I am looking forward to a very fruitful exchange with all of you. Thank you very much for being here, and for your attention.



**Christian Spahr**, Head of Media Program SEE of Konrad Adenauer Foundation,

is a media and political communications expert at Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a German think tank with 80 offices abroad. With his Sofia-based team, he offers further education for journalists, consults on media policy and promotes professional political communication.

From 2006 to 2012, he was press spokesman at Bitkom, the business association of Germany's internet economy. Christian is initiator and co-editor of studies on digital society. From 2003 to 2006 he was a business editor with Sächsische Zeitung, a high-circulation German regional newspaper. He had previously received journalistic training at Sächsische Zeitung and as a grantee of the KAS School of Journalism.

Christian is a board member of SEECOM (South East Europe Public Sector Communication Association). He has participated as a speaker or presenter at the following conferences: Kommunikationskongress (Berlin), Medientreffpunkt Mitteldeutschland (Leipzig), Frankfurt Days on Media Law, German-Russian Autumn Talks, South East Europe Media Forum, South East Europe Government Communication Conference, Club of Venice plenary meeting.



# Address by Daniel Mitov, Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

I would like to extend my gratitude to the numerous organizers of the conference for the invitation and also thank them for their readiness to host such an impressive and interesting event here in Sofia.

Now, I know this phrase is often abused but, really, few topics are as timely as the one we are discussing today! **While the dawn and initial excitement of the digital era are behind us and we have all become quite used to its convenience and benefits, we are increasingly faced with the task of better harnessing the opportunities it provides and responding more swiftly to the challenges it presents.**



16

Digitalization has contributed to the emergence of the post-industrial economy and has really opened up the world. It has given much meaning to globalization, contracted time and space and facilitated commerce. **Indeed, in the words of many, the brave new world is digital!**

The political dimensions of this process are very important.

**Firstly, it has helped rejuvenate our democracies!** It is now commonplace to see more e-voting, greater involvement of political party members, electronic canvassing, etc. Social media played a role in democratization as evidenced by the 'Arab Spring' movements. Development of digital tools has clearly contributed to greater involvement of young people in politics across the world. Terms such as 'Twitter Revolutions' probably overestimate the impact of digital networks but there is little doubt that political systems have been shaken and changed by technological innovation.

**Digitalization has also made a contribution to more vibrant civil societies!** Protest has become easier and digital networks allow more and more people to get involved more easily. Civil

society organizations use these tools to interact more effectively and build their capacities. The media environment has been transformed by the new on-line formats, bloggers are now opinion-makers. The combination of voice, vision and text have made online media very popular and ever more influential. **Importantly, digital tools now allow citizens to pressure institutions and demand redress and action.**

Let me illustrate this by telling you about an app that has recently caught the attention of many Bulgarians. (<http://grajdanite.bg/>) It is called 'Citizens' and it allows you to take a photo of someone who has parked their car in violation of traffic and parking rules. Once you have taken the photo you can then send it to Traffic Police for them to deal with it. And there are other instances which further illustrate this trend. E-petitions have now become very popular in Bulgaria as has crowd-sourcing and on-line charity activities which then pressure public institutions to address deficiencies.

**Digitalization is also a great opportunity for governments to improve their functioning and delivery of public services!** The effective delivery of services is one of the perennial questions of government and digital tools have made an important contribution. E-government has meant quicker, less expensive and more convenient services for citizens. Better e-services allow businesses to be more efficient and improve the overall business environment.

**Digital markets are key for Europe and are crucial drivers of economic growth in the 21st century!** The present government is adopting a series of measures to introduce more e-government. For instance, a new personalized e-health card is to be introduced leading to a number of improvements in the entire health care system.

Let me, however, move away for the more general benefits of digitalization and turn to EU politics and communication.

**At a more general level, the EU is facing some challenges where communication is of increasing relevance and importance!** We have witnessed the rise of electoral support for extreme parties which are Eurosceptic and tend to either misrepresent or misinterpret various EU policies or effects of such policies. Further, the global crisis has brought increasing expectations from our citizens. Sometimes these are not met sufficiently well and often measures to address and resolve problems are simply not explained well enough.

I am particularly concerned about the effects of crisis on younger people across Europe, those that have traditionally supported the integration process. We have some policies to help the



people unable to enter the labour market or find stable employment but often we encounter a more generalized discontent with the EU.

There are also other challenges which are probably more specific to the Bulgarian and South East European context which we need to recognize.

**EU membership is now a fact of life and there is a danger of simply taking its benefits for granted!** We simply enjoy the freedom to work, travel, study and trade within the Union. We simply take it for granted that the country is receiving billions of euros to help us improve our infrastructure, our schools, companies, etc. Research shows that many people are simply not interested in the origin of a public good; as long as it is there they just do not enquire further.

There is another challenge that we also need to respond to in the current situation. **South East Europe is again a playing field for competing interests and interpretations of events!** Following Russian aggression in Ukraine, we have been subjected to a sustained media campaign to misinform and misrepresent, to undermine elements of the geopolitical consensus in this country. Clearly, we need to respond to that and the European Council has already made some decisions relating to the entire Union.

Let me, then, also offer some thoughts on what our response should include and how we should approach it.

**Firstly, there must be sustained political will to address this challenge and it needs to be a long-term commitment.** I am pleased that this is now the case and the EU is acting at the appropriate level and with serious commitment.

**Secondly, we have to challenge some convenient attitudes.** For instance, we need to do away with the assumed certainty

of perceptions of EU membership benefits. For a long time, we simply took it for granted that these benefits are self-evident, in no need of specific attention when it comes to their communication. Well, this is no longer the case and the EU is now reacting to that.

**Thirdly, our EU communication has to be more strategic!** This means going beyond technocratic explanations of policy detail which are of interest to a few and are understood only by politicians and civil servants. We must construct narratives, interlink various policies and provide people with perspectives that truly illustrate what we trying to achieve - in dealing with the consequences of crisis, in delivering more business opportunities and greater employment, etc.

**Last but not least, in our communication we have to personalize the benefits of membership!** Because we are not simply building roads to link point A to point B. We are helping and creating new opportunities for specific towns, villages, companies, people. Behind every investment the EU makes, there is a personal story, a life improved. From this perspective, EU policies are really about people, and we need to showcase that.

If I had to come up with a hashtag for that approach, I would go for: **#EUMadePersonal**.

Dear friends, these are just some of my thoughts on a topic which deserves more of our attention, imagination and efforts! I wish you interesting and successful deliberations in the coming hours.

And, if you spot a badly parked car when you leave the hotel, be sure to use the alert app I mentioned in my talk: <http://grajdanite.bg - Citizens.bg>

Thank you for your attention!



**Daniel Mitov**

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, Sofia

Graduated from the Sofia University "Kliment Ohridski" (political science). 2006-2010 Executive Director of Bulgarian Democracy Foundation. 2010-2012 worked for the US National Democratic Institute (NDI) in USA and Iraq as a Program Manager of the Political party development program. As an official NDI representative, he has also worked in Brussels, Libya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ukraine, Yemen, Tunisia and others. Since 2014 Bulgarian Minister of Foreign Affairs.



# Fostering participation and partnership

## Introductory statement

By Erik den Hoedt

Let me explain why I think the topic of today's session is so important.

*Citizen Participation* is **crucial for any democracy**.

*Citizen Participation* is **more than participating** in work, school or even in social life.

*Citizen Participation* is about **being an active member of society**.

In our rapid changing and complex society this can be a real challenge. Many of us feel small, neglected and misunderstood. It is not easy to be an architect of one's own life. Unfortunately the government is part of this problem.

- 18 We try to do good, but from the standpoint of the citizen we often don't really help. We know that times have changed and we can no longer take the position of an all-knowing guiding father.

We want to take the position of a partner. But do we communicate as a partner? Do we invite people to talk back to us?

I think social media are a great opportunity to improve communication between citizens and the government. But they must be used in the right manner and with the right objectives. I am sure that this morning we will learn from our keynote speaker and panellists what to do to do things right.



Erik den Hoedt

Director, Public Information/Communication Office, Ministry of General Affairs, The Netherlands

Erik studied human geography at the University of Groningen. Since 1984 he has worked for the Central Government of the Netherlands in several management roles in the fields of statistics, internal organisation and, for the last ten years, in government communication. Since 2010 he has been director of the Public Information and Communication Office of the Netherlands. One of the tasks of the office is research on the effectiveness of government communication and how to improve it. Online tools is one of the topics.

# Case study on Twitter: the International Mother Language Day in Bulgaria<sup>(1)</sup>

By Aleksandra Atanasova

I analyzed the results of a campaign I did a month ago on Twitter, as those can reveal three important things about successful online communication between EU institutions and citizens.

The EC Representation in Sofia decided to commemorate the International Mother Language Day on 21 February with a game on Twitter. Its aim was to a) underline the value of Bulgarian as a native language and b) in broader sense, to touch on the importance of Europe's linguistic diversity. The concept was simple: throughout the weekend (21 and 22 of Febr) the Representation's account tweeted eight visuals, each of which contained a loanword used in modern Bulgarian, but originating from other European language: French, German, Italian and English. For example, the French word for "pavement" is *trottoir* is also "тротоар" in Bulgarian. Users were then asked to substitute the loanwords with Bulgarian sounding neologisms they invent themselves and tweet those words as a Reply underneath the original tweet. The point was to make them think about the language and also have fun while coming up with new words.

To ensure broader outreach of the game we contacted in advance three influential bloggers, linguists and avid Twitter users (each of them having 2000 followers on average) and asked them to play the role of a jury and give points to the neologisms they like most. The bloggers eagerly embraced the idea and engaged before and during the campaign, both in writing blog posts about the game and in tweeting to their followers and tagging people's handles so that they see the contest. Thus we could rely on the bloggers as multipliers without having to be pushy and tweet all the promo content ourselves.

Never before had so many people simultaneously engaged with our tweets. On the days of the campaign 110 users took part with numerous replies. The number of replies was about 400 for the weekend, and the potential reach of all tweets related to the

campaign was 860, 000 (just to benchmark, the total potential reach of all tweets from Rep's account for the period November 2013 – January 2015 is about 2 million, so we nearly halved it in 2 days). And we had about 100 new followers for the 2 days.

The campaign did not only affect our Twitter account: **we gained in visibility on traditional media**. Several days after the biggest online news portal in Bulgaria DNEVNIK re-published the blog post about the game written by one of the bloggers. A week after we were contacted by the National Bulgarian Radio, they also wanted to make a reportage on the game. And lastly, one of the leading Bulgarian TV channels contacted us as they also planned to make something about the game. All this without us sending a single press release! This is huge having in mind the Twittersphere in Bulgaria is extremely underdeveloped: there are only 40 000 active Twitter accounts in Bulgaria.

So, what conclusions can we draw from all this?

1. First, cooperation with multipliers (bloggers, influential social media users) is extremely important for the success of an online campaign. Blogs help bridge the gap between social media and traditional media. This is very important especially in our country where 49% of the people don't have Internet access and their chief source of information is TV or radio.
2. Second, light content is picked up faster than institutional messages on policies, regulations etc. Light content helps us build the image of the EU as an open and friendly institution. By occasionally posting light content we make users more engaged and more reactive to other types of content: some users that took part in the game later stayed active and engaged with Rep's tweets on other topics.
3. Third, successful social media action can create positive media coverage and thus influence the mass media image of the European Commission.

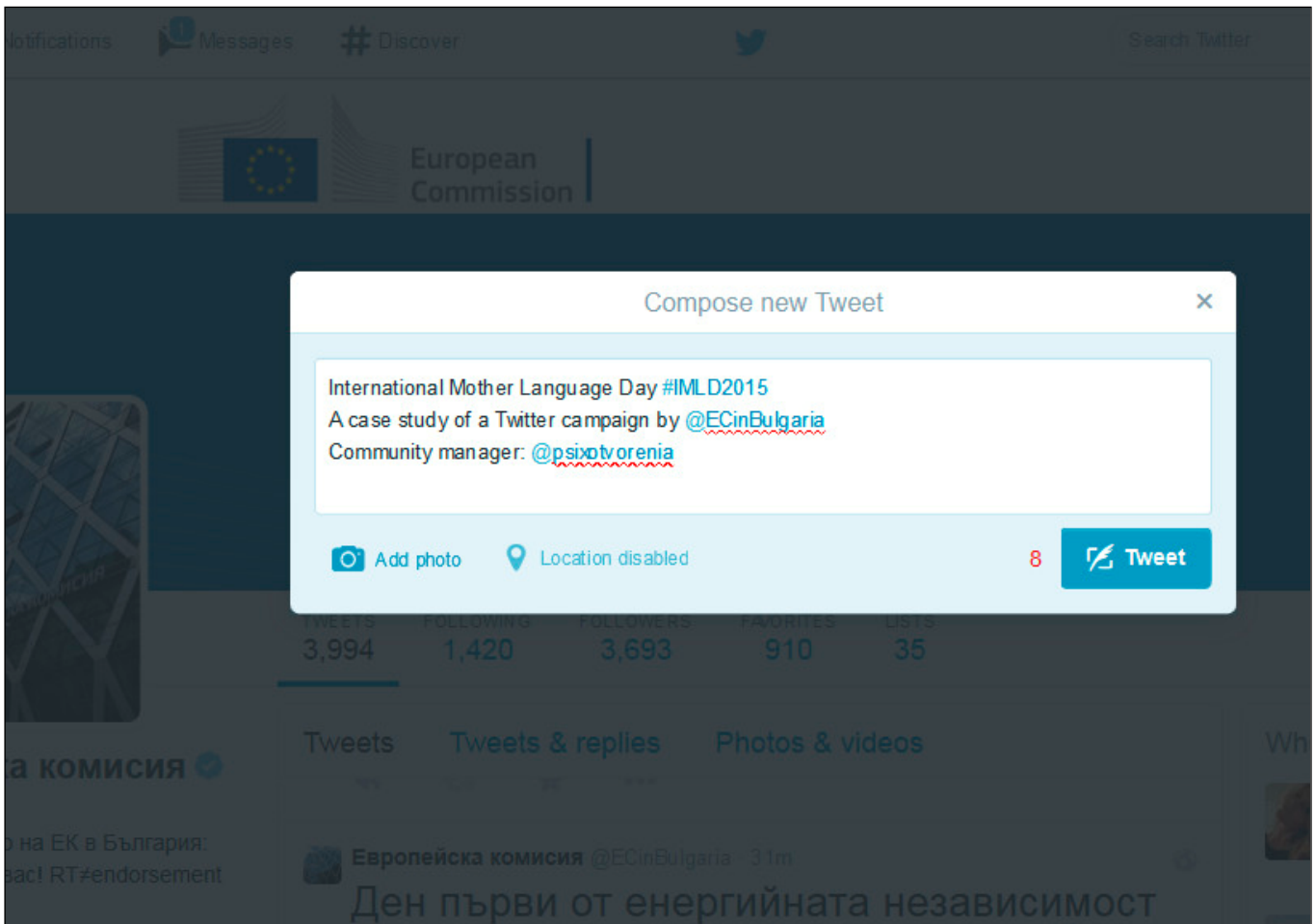
(1) This text is not an official document of the European Commission.



Aleksandra Atanasova

Social Media Community Manager, "Share Europe Online", European Commission Representation in Bulgaria, Sofia

Aleksandra studied Psychology at Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and Humboldt University Berlin. Later she completed a German-French Master's degree in Communication and Cultural Studies at University Sophia-Antipolis in Nice, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski and European University Viadrina in Frankfurt (Oder). She worked as Editor-in-chief for a monthly magazine and as Media analyst. For the past two years she has been working in social media for two European institutions (EP, EC). She speaks English, German, French, Spanish and Bulgarian.



20

On occasion of the International Mother Language Day (IMDL) on 21 February the EC Representation in Bulgaria launched a language game on its Twitter profile @ECinBulgaria. Its aim was to raise awareness about the value of Bulgarian as a native language and, in broader sense, to touch on the importance of Europe's linguistic diversity.

The format of the game was simple: on Saturday and Sunday @ECinBulgaria tweeted nine Bulgarian loanwords of different origin (English, French, German, Italian), each word was presented in a visual and posted in a separate tweet. The users were asked to substitute the loanwords with Bulgarian-sounding neologisms that they invent themselves and to write their suggestions as **replies** directly under each tweet.

The local context: a famous Bulgarian writer from the XX century tried to "clean up" the language from Turkish loanwords, creating some interesting and some ridiculous new words, which entered textbooks but never made it to the actual vocabulary. As his attempts are well-known to all Bulgarians and as modern Bulgarian contains many loanwords (from Western Europe, Russian, Turkish), we suppose that the game had the **psychological effect of a challenge** – which could explain in a way the buzz it produced.

To assure active participation and bigger outreach of the online campaign, the Rep contacted **three bloggers and influential Twitter users**, all of whom have interest in linguistics: a translator (@mariapeicheva - **2031 followers** on Twitter), the au-

thor of the one of the most popular websites for Bulgarian grammar and orthography (@pvarbanova - **1008 followers**), and a member of the International Linguistic Olympiad (ILO) (@bozhobg - **3350 followers**).

The bloggers were invited per PM to act as a jury in the game. They were asked to give points to the participants whose neologisms impress them as 1) original, 2) semantically adequate and 3) close to the real language. The bloggers embraced the idea heartily – thus we could count on them as multipliers. Two of them even created blog posts dedicated to the initiative, which they shared on social media mentioning our account.

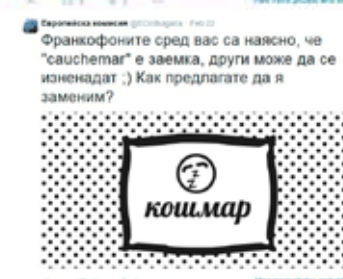
Here are the words we chose:

- 1) weekend
- 2) printer
- 3) money change (Bulg. "песто" from Italian "resto")
- 4) hipster
- 5) magnifying glass (Bulg. "лупа" from German "die Lupe")
- 6) sidewalk (Bulg. "тротоар" from French "trottoir")
- 7) sports suit (Bulg. „анцуг" from German „Sportanzug")
- 8) nightmare (Bulg. "кошмар" from French "cauchemar")
- 9) cocktail

No hashtag was introduced as we wanted to **keep all engagement on our account** (Replies) and we already had multipliers to count on for outreach. 9 tweets were posted throughout the weekend, **the total number of tweets** related to the campaign from @ECinBulgaria's account was **15** (see section 3 for KPIs)

Here are several screenshots of the tweets posted throughout the weekend. As the number of Replies are not visible, we suggest checking the URLs:

<http://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69074060321284097>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69534595718389760>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69503132801224704>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69467902434418688>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69436448589545473>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69201144972611584>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69169693463998464>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5-69134465743757312>  
<https://twitter.com/ECinBulgaria/status/5691009411548523522>



## Who participated?

Never before had so many users interacted simultaneously with Rep's content. In total **109 Twitter users** took part in the game on 21 - 22 February, with different interactions: replies, retweets and favorites. The high number of favourites suggests that there were many users observing the game (favoring others' suggestions), but not directly taking part in it.

What's more astonishing, the most active participation (replies) came from influential accounts (accounts that have more than 1000 followers): out of the **34 influential accounts** interacting with the content 4 users had over **4000 followers**, 6 users over **3000 followers**, 10 users over **2000 followers**, and 14 users over **1000 followers**. Due to the large followe base of these active users the overall potential reach of the campaign was

extremely high (see next section for KPIs). Upon analyzing the most active influential accounts, we found that 95% of them are **bloggers or journalists** – so people who are interested in writing and have deeper relation with language.

Understandably, the most intense interactions came from the the three members of the jury @pvabranova @bozhobg and @mariapeicheva who sent in total 37 replies and retweeted our content 27 times.

The majority of the users involved in the game appeared to live in Bulgaria; however, Twitter geolocation data showed tweets coming from the UK (4), Germany (2), France (2) and Austria (3) and Belgium (11), which implies that Bulgarians living abroad also participated. We must consider the limitations of this type of information as location is not easy to track.





**How did the campaign perform in terms of KPIs?**

**Outreach**

The **total potential reach** of all tweets related to the campaign (**PMs excluded**) is **804,450**, which is an incredibly high number compared with the average performance of the account and having in mind the low Twitter penetration in Bulgaria (just 40,000 active Twitter accounts). The average daily potential reach in the days of the campaign is **222,931**. For benchmark: the average daily reach for the period Nov 2013 – Jan 2015 of the Twitter account @ECinBulgaria is just **23,473**. And another benchmark: the **total potential reach** of all tweets by @ECinBulgaria for the period Nov 2013 - Jan 2015 is **9,600,305** - which means in just 4 days we reached almost one tenth of it.

**Engagement**

The 15 tweets (**replies excluded**) sent by the Rep's account on

21-22 Feb solely **provoked a 30-fold increase in engagements**: all interactions with the account (Replies by others, @Mentions, Retweets) are 406, out of which 291 are replies and 40 are mentions of the account. (post-campaign tweets and mentions are not included in this number, but are added to the KPI potential reach) - these numbers increase when we add the tweets posted before and after the campaign.

The **engagement rate** (# of replies divided by # of sent tweets per profile) for the period 21-22 Feb is **25.00**. For benchmark: the average engagement rate for the period Nov 2013 – Jan 2015 is **1.29**.

**Followers gain**

The followers growth in the days of the campaign is **18 new/day** (benchmark: average growth for Nov 13 – Jan 15 is **4 new / day**). In total, the account gained about 90 new followers in the actual days of the campaign and in the following two days.

Top Posters by Potential Reach

User	Tweets	Potential Reach
ecinbulgaria	44	159,920
maripeicheva	31	62,633
unicholasgomes	2	48,558
bozhobg	7	23,365
pvarbanova	22	22,139
arhivatora	9	20,446
varisummer	5	14,430
music	3	14,028
suncho	4	13,138
raddev	11	11,820
yurukov	2	11,658
no_name_no_user	5	9,123
_gradniko	4	8,456

Stories By Type



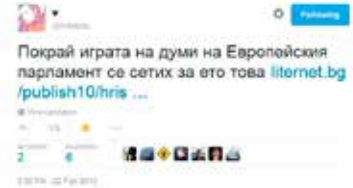
22

**Reactions**

The general opinion about the game was **very positive**: people congratulated us on the idea and mentioned the Rep's handle in their tweets. Surprisingly, there were **only two negative reactions** out of the hundreds of replies we received: one user asked what is the actual function of the EC Representation, another one suggested we stop dealing with insignificant topics. Another surprise if that influential Twitter users embraced the topic easily. Here are some reactions we got:



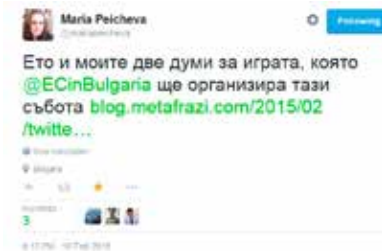
"@Vevivive: I feel divided: who will win the Oscars? Who'll win @ECinBulgaria's contest? Did the EU start this game on purpose to distract us from the Oscars?"



"@milototo: The word game by the European commission reminds me of this poem: ...."



"@pvarbanova: I had a nightmare last night, but woke up before it turned into a bigger nightmare." (word play)

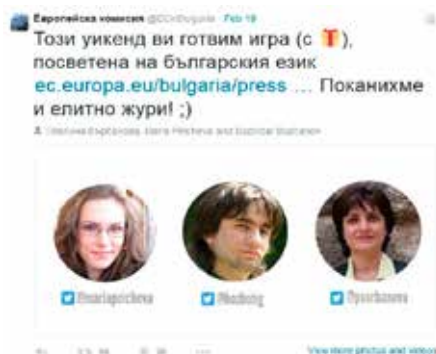


"@mariapeicheva: Here's my blog post about the game @ECinBulgaria is planning this weekend"

## Takeways

What can we learn from the campaign? Partly it succeeded because it was light content, but challenging and locally relevant. Still, there are a few other conclusions we could draw.

1. Users “made the show” themselves and had fun. The Rep’s account was just a platform where people discussed each others’ suggestions, faved or RT-ed each other and felt free to express themselves. There was no need for pushy messages and call-to-actions, as people enjoyed the game and readily engaged with the content. The proof: each of the 9 tweets received **in average 45 comments**.



**@ECinBulgaria** Brace yourselves for a language game this weekend (+ small gifts) We invited a highly respectable jury!

2. The three bloggers invited for jury **voluntarily became multipliers**. The members of the jury were not asked to write blog posts about the game or to create additional buzz on Facebook or Twitter, but they did so, because they liked the idea and wanted to help it reach more people. They were not chosen just because of their social influence (although their follower base helped a lot for outreach), but primarily because of their interest in the topic.

3. This campaign **built lasting relations** with influential social media users. Not every content we post can be that engaging/successful. However, such initiatives are very important, because they create readiness for engagement which lasts and **affects how other types of content are perceived**.



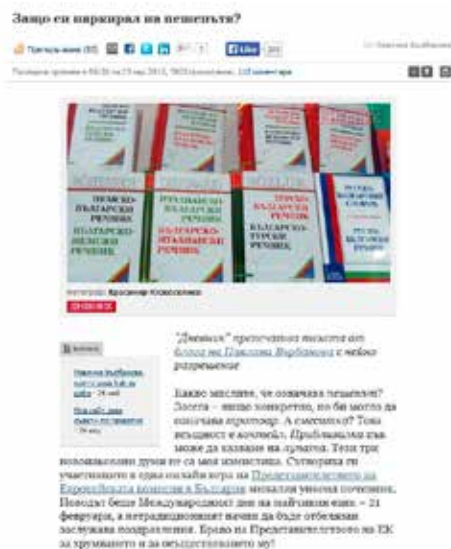
**A Facebook post** about the game written by the member of the jury Pavlina Varbanova. This was a copy of her blog post analyzing the results of the game. She sent us the link afterwards.

23

4. Last but not least, the blog post about the game written by Pavlina Varbanova became so popular that it was later re-published in the biggest online news portal in Bulgaria - [www.dnevnik.bg](http://www.dnevnik.bg) - on occasion of Bulgaria’s national holiday on 3rd March.

Although the Rep looked for no traditional media outreach,

this came as a direct proof of 1) how successful social media action can create positive coverage and influence the media image of the EC; and 2) how important cooperation with bloggers is. The article about the campaign is a tremendous success in a country where Twitter is used by a tiny segment of the population and having in mind that there was no advertising on more popular social media channels such as Facebook.



If you missed the game on Twitter last weekend. RT @dnevnik Why did you park on the sidewalk?

# Recipe for a successful dialogue with citizens. Poland and government digital communication

By Magdalena Kudlicka

Government accountability and responsibility through digital communication is not a simple assignment to deal with. Conducting a productive dialogue with citizens using on-line tools requires a well-thought-out strategy, with specified content, adequately wrapped up activities, employers working 24/7 and an effective crisis management strategy. And even having all of this we can't be sure of success.



24

## What can we do to increase the chance of a successful dialogue with citizens?

Following the opinions of the internet market analysts on development directions of the on-line communication in 2015 we should:

- **Work on the content!** Nowadays people are subject to a flood of information, so if the content isn't sexy, shocking, catchy, etc. it is perceived as boring, which means that it goes unnoticed.
- **Keep it simple and clear!** We live in a fast-paced world, time is luxury so we should be flexible and communicate not with long, boring, full of sophisticated expressions texts but concise and simple ones, using infographics.
- **Don't be afraid of "the NEW"!** Analysts forecast that this year completely new and innovative on-line communicators will appear. In order to emphasize how modern and flexible administration can be, we shouldn't be afraid to use IT novelties, however the rule doesn't apply to the "old" communicators: it is strongly recommended not to create new fan pages, Twitter or Facebook accounts for every short-term activity.

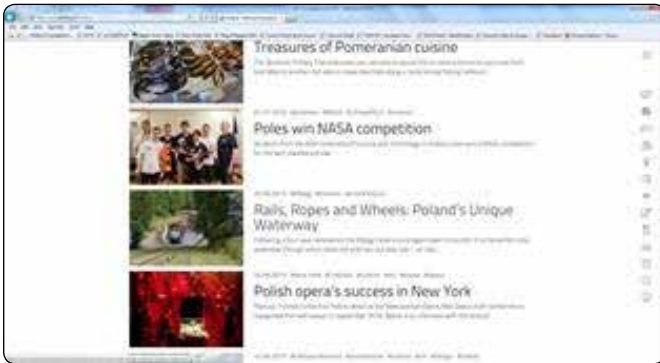
## The obvious conclusion is that:

If we want to enhance the dialogue with citizens and increase their involvement we have to adjust to unique conditions and needs of every European society. Otherwise there will be no one to listen to us. Usability is a must! It's really important to think as a client, not as an authority. We have to build on a coherent communication plan with carefully selected key messages. In order to avoid any confusion in the way our messages are perceived, we have to focus on the continuity of the narration. We should look for a way to use (in terms of "utilizing" not "taking advantage of") the natural potential of social movements generated every time by a big event.



## One remark in the margin:

If we want to be perceived as accountable and responsible communicators, we should never use on-line communication as the only tool of the communication strategy. We have to remember that focusing on using on-line tools and neglecting other communication channels diminishes the effectiveness of communication activities in general.



## Polish best practices:

In December 2014 the Press Office, which is in charge of e-diplomacy, digital communication and social media in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, launched the [www.polska.pl](http://www.polska.pl) website. This new portal has a modern look, new functions and an address easy to remember: Polska.pl (or: Poland.pl). It has been designed in compliance with *the Rules for communicating the POLSKA brand*, according to which the name of Poland is written in its original form, in the Polish language: POLSKA, which is supposed to be a recognizable name of Poland's brand abroad.

Its main goal is to present the most fascinating, exceptional and beautiful facts about Poland. You can find there information on tourist regions to visit, interesting monuments or important cultural events, it also tells stories of famous Poles and it helps you to plan your visit to Poland. It has some useful functions which facilitate exploration of the country, i.e. the user can add to a planned trip or to a shopping cart an article published on Polska.pl about places worthy of visiting and publish it on a social media platform or send it to other participants of the trip. On the right you can find icons linked with business, cultural and science websites, which provide you with useful information on how to study, invest and live in Poland.

This new look of Polska.pl was appreciated in February 2015 by experts, who recognized the portal as the best in its category in a Mobile Trends Awards Competition.



**Magdalena Kudlicka**

Head of European Union Unit, Department of Public Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Poland, Warsaw

Magdalena studied Political Science at Warsaw University. 2009-2014 Kudlicka was involved in drafting and implementation of the communication strategies for the Polish presidency, the 5th and the 10th anniversary of the Polish EU-Membership and in providing information around the 2009 and 2014 elections for the European Parliament. 2003-2015 several positions at the Polish government administration in fields of civil service, foreign affairs, internal affairs and coordination of EU affairs. Besides, she was involved in the implementation of the communication principles of the POLSKA brand. She has cooperated with European institutions, EU Member States, national administration as well as candidate countries on a regular basis. As of 2009, Head of Unit for Information Strategy in the European Information Department of the Office of the Committee for the European Integration. Since 2011 Head of Unit for the European Union at the Public and Cultural Diplomacy Department of the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



# The digital art of conversation

By Thibault Lesénécal

During the last International Conference “Digital Communication Challenges” in Sofia in March 2015, I was honoured to be invited to join a panel where I presented a certain vision of the Digital Art of Conversation or the Art of Digital Conversation, as you prefer. Here comes the abstract of what I wanted to share with the audience.



26

## 1. Define your objectives, audiences and resources

Before going all digital and joining online conversations, it is important to set up your objectives, the audiences you want to reach and the resources you can afford to devote to the task. Although there is no obligation for any kind of organisation to go online, once you do turning back might prove to be difficult. A clear sense of purpose will help you at all stages. And you should not hand over the keys of your digital world to your trainees, not even the best ones.

Then, look for the right platform. Facebook is great for reaching younger people, but not the very young anymore. Keep in mind how consuming it is to establish a significant presence on Facebook nowadays. LinkedIn is perfect for engaging in deep conversation with skilled professionals, yet it requires more personal investment from your team. Reddit allows a mix of fun and very profound remarks, but the level of control is lower than on other networks.

Once you know which platforms are necessary to fulfil your goals, make sure you have the required people and resources to manage the platforms in the long term. It takes time to build a brand image, so don't expect any return too soon. The European Parliament's Facebook page now boasts more than 1.7 million fans, but we have been running the page since 2009.

## 2. Spot the conversation

People are talking about your organisation online, whether you know it or not. There is worse: they are now saying things you might not like about you, your brand, and your organisation. There is a handful of social-media monitoring tools which can help to identify the conversation you are associated with. The monitoring task may be an extra burden, but it will help you to narrow your efforts and to focus on the conversations where you can bring some added value.

## 3. Join the conversation

Offer your expertise and knowledge in existing conversations. People are talking about draft legislation on the agricultural policy and you know exactly where to find the debated text? If you point them to relevant information, people will trust you. Adopt the tonality, practices and codes of the platform and of the audience, so that people on the platform understand you and accept you in their community.

Building your online reputation will take time – don't rush. Stay human, answer the questions you can and be honest about the ones you cannot.

On social media, it is not possible to control everything, and it is OK. It's the beauty of it, if you ask me. Nevertheless, you need to accept a certain loss of control. But it doesn't mean you must lose all control. Social media is about soft power, not control. Make sure your boss understands this clearly too.

## 4. Echo the conversation

Sometimes social media are very noisy and people are lost in the flow. If you provide them with easy ways to keep up with the conversation wherever they are or to select only the flows they are interested in, you will be considered as helpful and reliable.

During the European elections night, while suspense for the results was building up, a Twitter dashboard gave people a visual idea of the amount and content of the ongoing conversation on Twitter. They could get a taste of European reactions on Twitter and access all the content they would find relevant.

On a daily basis, our platform [www.epnewshub.eu](http://www.epnewshub.eu) aggregates all social media publications from Members of the European Parliament in real time. Users can select the topics they want to read about as well as in which language.

You can also advertise the ongoing conversation and the possibility to join in your more traditional means of communication. By doing so, you should see your audience grow.

## 5. Organise conversation

Once you have built trust and interest among your communities, you can organise conversations between established experts, politicians and citizens. In the European Parliament, we organise Facebook chats once a month. In March, Parliament President Martin Schulz took part in a live chat with 246 users interacting and fielding about 300 questions. So far, more than 50 chats have been organised.

On LinkedIn, we launched a pilot project last year. Citizens and LinkedIn group members were asked to provide feedback about the impact of the Troika in their respective countries. MEP Alejandro Cercas took the contributions into account to draft his report and informed the participants of the different stages of the process.

## 6. Initiate conversation

And sometimes, there is no ongoing conversation on a topic you believe is important. As an established community member, you can start discussions and see for yourself if the topic resonates with people.

For example, the Facebook team of the European Parliament starts around 100 discussions a month on the page on both complex and light topics. Our most successful discussions are posts which gather more than 1,000 interactions (likes, shares, comments); there were 29 of them in February. Month after month, we now know which discussions will raise interest and which will be more quiet.

As mentioned earlier, it is crucial to adopt the right tonality when starting or joining a discussion on a given platform. Each platform has its own specificities.

You will soon discover that a successful digital strategy revolves around good story-telling. And what is good story-telling? The constant combination of three factors: some permanency (your values, tonality...) with elements of surprise and innovation with a high ideal that could lead to some transformation. More than the digital contemporary tools and networks, we believe the quality of the stories is the key to successful communication.

My final advice: Fail often, fail early, fail cheaply. #printitandstickitinthelevator. If you are not failing, you're not trying. Again, make sure your boss understands that too.



**Thibault Lesénécal** is Acting Head of the DG COMM Web Communication Unit of the European Parliament, where he contributed to the establishment and development of the Parliament's presence on 12 social media platforms, including online interaction with Europeans. Thibault's unit produces two-three stories a day in 22 languages as well as weekly infographics for the general public. From 2004 to 2012 he worked as EP's Digital Media Co-Ordinator.

Thibault has a wide experience in online editorial production, strategy and consulting. He studied at the KEDGE Business School and ESCP Europe in France and holds a Master Degree in information and media, focussing on communication and journalism.

# STRATCOM – WHERE DO WE STAND

*By the editors*

At the plenary meeting held in Latvia on 5-6 June 2014 the Club discussed, among others, a number of strategic challenges for national communicators and the adaptation of organizational frameworks to the technological and operational innovations. In this context, the Club agenda included several elements of public diplomacy in progress, with an overview of global trends, national approaches and indexation surveys.

Convergences n° 5 (May 2014 edition) announced that "Strategic Communications" (StratCom) was in the centre of Riga's plenary programme. Without necessarily referring to the wide variety of definitions of this expression (which date from 2004 onwards, mainly in the US universe and strictly connected to political-military objectives), during the last few years StratCom has increasingly acquired an inter-disciplinary connotation to encompass the approach by skillful communicators who think, act and care about challenges that every individual faces in the information age.

StratCom is an instrument aiming to help states and governments to improve their communication with local populations and international audiences. It appears a pure necessity in those countries which have been challenged in the geo-political arena.

In huge organizations such as NATO, which have recently established a Centre of Excellence in Latvia to operate in this field, StratCom aims to guarantee a multi-faceted coordination framework of activities covering Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs and complex Information Operations.

Other international large-scale organizations (UN, EU, etc.), individual EU Member States, countries candidate to EU membership and third countries are in the process of elaborating similar frameworks to build efficient and effective communication strategies, which require consolidated efforts in terms of information environment analysis, a clear mission and vision, the setting up of concrete objectives and the identification of efficient tools complementary to each other, and especially a sound knowledge of the audiences' profiles and their main expectations.

An important factor which enables the key players to act in a win-win context is their willingness to cooperate with each other and establish true partnership on equal footing, and to use dialogue and to establish close connections between "the messenger and the recipient" without any hampering linguistic barriers. The latter element is also crucial for the communicators, since it enables them to have a clear and immediate understanding of general criticism and public opinion trends.

What has happened since Riga's plenary in 2014? A lot. Political authorities, communication experts and practitioners, academics and scientists are increasingly recognizing the undisputable impact of the information machine and of a full-fledged strategic communication approach on the social, economic, cultural and geo-political future of the planet. Communication can boost or demolish economic and financial trends, the development of entire populations, the political destiny of countries' rulers and of international organizations.

What has recently happened in the EU's Eastern Neighborhood area gives us the temperature of socio-political divergences and real conflicts where there is a need to guarantee proximity with citizens, respect of human rights, share of and fight for democratic values, and concrete help for economic recovery and social development.

The events occurred in East Europe and in particular in the Ukrainian borders and its territory have urged the international community to undertake efforts not only to contrast conflictual phenomena and take different measures to bring relief to the citizens of the affected areas, but also to work on a preventive basis, studying ways and means to bring solidarity to the population by communicating with it in a more effective way and supporting the media in their difficult task to spread clear, correct, objective and independent information.

In this context, on 19 and 20 March 2015 the European Council, in the framework of the future EU's external relations, invited the European External Action Service (EEAS) to explore, acting in cooperation with its institutional partners, possibilities for coordinated communication strategies to challenge and counter-balance ongoing disinformation campaigns (see the attached extract of the EC's Conclusions – doc. 11/15). Since then, the EEAS has been intensively cooperating with all the EU institutions and partners in the multidisciplinary implementation of the above-mentioned EC's conclusions.

While the EU Member States have been discussing on this topic in different configurations within the European Council and Council of the EU, the Club of Venice hosted contributions on StratCom in its plenary meeting held in Rome in November 2014 and in the joint conference on Digital Communication Challenges organized in Sofia in March 2015 with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), the South-East Europe Public Communicators' Association (SEECOM) and the Martens Centre for European Studies. On that last occasion, a Senior Expert from the NATO StratCom Centre of Excellence gave an overview of the influence of social media and other audiovisual platforms on today's hot geo-political scenarios (East Europe, Middle East) of which we



reproduce here below a few commented slides.

As discussed in Sofia, the big challenges rise when traditional and social media as well as multimedia platforms and armies of trolls are being applied in a coordinated manner. One more reason for counter-communication strategies which are in no way propagandistic, but aim to contrast the misinformation through honest, objective and concrete communication activities – and support as much as possible all other media organizations who act likewise.


The Club was also instrumental in helping develop a communication network which will cooperate with the EEAS in its StratCom process and will most likely organize a thematic seminar on this topic in the coming months.

What needs to be borne in mind is the huge potential of the StratCom approach, which in theory should be applied to face with all kinds of crisis. As a matter of fact, integrated StratCom is the recipe to excellence and success in all public communication challenges.

Further details on this topic in Convergences n° 9.



The editors: Vincenzo Le Voci and Philippe Caroyez



European Council

Brussels, 20 March 2015  
(OR. en)

**EUCO 11/15**

**CO EUR 1  
CONCL 1**

**COVER NOTE**

---

From: General Secretariat of the Council

To: Delegations

---

Subject: European Council meeting (19 and 20 March 2015)  
– Conclusions

---

13. The European Council stressed the need to challenge Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns and invited the High Representative, in cooperation with Member States and EU institutions, to prepare by June an action plan on strategic communication. The establishment of a communication team is a first step in this regard.



# Social media as tool of Russia's influence activities

By Sanda Svetoka



## Social media – from networking to weaponisation?

- **Increased use of social media to achieve political and military goals**
- **Aim** – inform and influence, recruit, collect information, conduct operations etc.
- **Who** – state and non-state actors
- **Examples** – Israel/Palestine, Syria, ISIS, Russia/Ukraine

The information is playing more and more an important role in the modern conflicts. With the rapid development of information technologies, the information environment has considerably changed and the social media has been increasingly used by different state and non-state actors in order to achieve their political and military goals.

Social media can play an important role in recruiting the supporters, collecting the information, coordinating the operations, targeting the adversary, but most importantly – to inform and influence the audiences of interest.

One can name several examples where social media has been used to gain more...

30



## Russia's narrative themes

- Euro-Atlantic structures are useless and harmful
- anti-American and anti-EU narrative (the EU is weak, the West is lying)
- neighbouring states are «mistakes of the history» or failed states
- revisionist trends towards Former Soviet Republics
- discriminative approach towards minorities

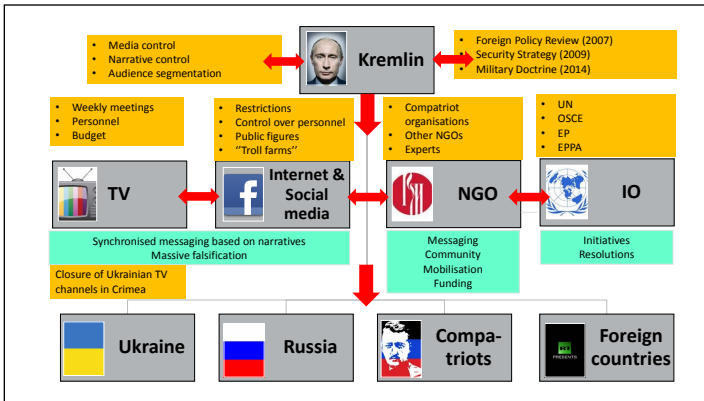
The link to the youtube video on misinformation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N7PpdYil-7Y> + some narrative:

The video downloadable through the above link demonstrates the themes Russia uses to support its initiative and is addressed to Ukrainian inhabitants, Russian-speaking populations in former Soviet Union and the Western countries.

Launched on VK and YouTube and migrated to Facebook and LiveLeak and other social media, it appeared in Sept 2014 in English, Russian and German. As of July 2015 it has been viewed by 150 000 people.

It is sub-titled in English, German, French, Spanish, Italian and Portuguese.



Crimea is a test-case where an intensive information campaign and cyber warfare played a key role together with other purely military strategic activities.

The diagramme describes how the integrated approach used by Russia in its information campaign was carried out in the Ukrainian framework. It includes strong strategic narrative based on the policy documents, ability to pursue a control over the media, segmentation of the audiences as well as effective use of different combined tools: traditional/social media, "agents of influence", resolutions to international organizations and others.

### Russia's social and internet media tools

- News portals, online magazines, blogs
- Coordinated use of traditional and social media (VK, FB, Twitter, Youtube)
- Increasing control over online activities
- New radio & internet media service SPUTNIK

### «Troll Armies»

- Widely used for **misinformation, falsification, deception**, also recruitment and intelligence
- Phenomena of trolling - how much do we know?

The trolling (supposedly in an organized form) has been noticed in social media and online comments in several countries: UK, USA, Germany, Baltic States, Finland, Russia and Ukraine. The media reports have also revealed the existence of an "Internet Research Agency" which employs hundreds of workers.



## Methods of “trolling”

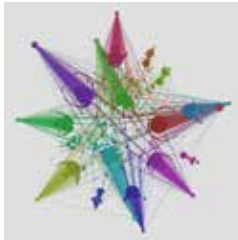
- Sharing information by «trustworthy» sources (RT, Sputnik, Pervij Kanal etc.)
- Fabrication of facts, images, videos
- Diverting the conversation to different topic
- Publicly harrasing opponents – name calling, attack on personality (social roles, values, beliefs, personal features)
- Sending out fake messages in the name of opponent
- In commentaries – requesting proof from others without ability to provide proof themselves

Possible effects of trolling:

- hesitation by other commentators to participate in the discussions
- confusion, value of truth diminished
- self-organization of commentators
- “aggression leads to aggression
- false impression that many share the same view
- doubt about impact on public discourse outside the web circuit



## Networks of bots



- With the help of Social Network Analysis tight interconnection among **17 590 Twitter** users identified.
- Increase of bot registration coincided with the start of Euromaidan protests in Ukraine

By using the Social Network Analysis the researcher Lawrence Alexander has identified a network of over 17 000 Twitter users who have been previously identified as bots by other users and have been tightly interconnected.

In his analysis, Alexander has found out that the periods of increased bot registration coincided with the start of the Euromaidan protests in Ukraine (late fall and winter of 2013) and subsequent armed uprising by pro-Russian militants in eastern Ukraine (early spring 2014).

32



## What to do about it?

- **Weaponisation of social media in future conflicts will not fade away**
- Recognize it as a tool of influence
- Use the power of social media to tell your narrative
- Put more efforts on monitoring and analysis
- Enhance the critical thinking and media (incl.soc.media) literacy
- Support the efforts in analytical journalism and fact finding initiatives

### Sanda Svetoka

Senior Expert, Centre of Excellence, NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, Riga

Graduated in political science at the University of Latvia (MA). 2004-2005 News reporter at the main Latvian information agency LETA. In 2005 she joined the Latvian Ministry of Defence to work for the Bilateral Cooperation Section where she was responsible for coordinating defence cooperation and assistance to the NATO partner countries. 2010-2011 Public Relations Advisor to the NATO Advisory Team in Kosovo which supports the build-up of the Ministry for the Kosovo Security Force. 2011-2014 Press Officer at the Ministry of Defence of Latvia. Since 2014 Senior Expert at the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence.



# Five points of alignment between China and Russia <sup>(1)</sup>

By Vessela Tcherneva

Europe has for some time regarded the concept of non-interference as obsolete, a relic from a time before relinquishing sovereignty, at least partially, became the standard for states of the European Union.

For the public in the West, the atrocities in Rwanda and Darfur were further proof of the necessity of the “responsibility to protect”, the antipode of the non-interference concept. The world should be based on rules and their global enforcement – this became the basic assumption of European actions in the Balkans and elsewhere. But the recent crisis over Ukraine has reminded us that in much of the world, leaders assert their global position by holding strong to the notion of non-interference, not only in order to shield their domestic politics from the spectre of regime change, but also to limit foreign influence in their broader region.

During a recent workshop with European and Chinese foreign policy analysts, a few similarities between the Russian and the Chinese “defences” from global influences were striking.

First, whether fed by conspiracy theories, propaganda, or genuine concerns, both countries are driven in their support for non-interference by fear of internal destabilisation. The colour revolutions were, for Russia, a series of Western plots that can be repeated on the streets of Moscow; for China, the student protests in Hong Kong are equally fuelled by an invisible American hand.

Second, the penetration of foreign media and the Internet is perceived both in Moscow and in Beijing as a strategic move to undermine the respective regimes. In fact, Putin has called the Internet a “CIA project”. As a result, both governments limit the access to foreign media. The Russian government recently

adopted a law limiting foreign ownership of outlets, while in Beijing, foreign media is simply censored. Both governments are building national firewalls against the global Internet as well; though Russia, which has made moves to consolidate its .ru and .rf domains and repatriate data, is a novice in comparison to its eastern neighbour who already has a largely closed (self-contained, domestically controlled) Internet.

Third, the Russian fear of radical Islamic terrorism from Chechnya has its analogue in China, where the Xinjiang massacre has made the leadership aware of possible limits to China’s involvement in the Middle East. “Even if we feel we must protect our economic interests in the Middle East and would want to join the coalition against ISIS, we have to take into account that this can be read as anti-Muslim move by our large Muslim minority,” one scholar explained. Beside its geopolitical calculations, Russia’s support for Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was to some extent founded on Russia’s fear of Islamic radicalism.

Fourth, both Russia and China attempt to “nationalise” their elites: the former recently forced the oligarchs to move their money, children, and healthcare from Switzerland and London back to Russia; the latter asks its tycoons to bring their profits back to China and the young Chinese to return home upon graduation from the US and the UK.

Fifth, the readiness and capacity to executing “small wars”, as one Chinese analyst put it, is for both countries a legitimate weapon for maintaining their respective “spheres of influence”. The outlines of such actions are vague, but their existence seems unquestioned, posing a significant opposition to the Western order. The question is how long China will feel comfortable in the world that their Russian partner brings - a world of revisionism and unpredictability.

(1) This text first appeared at [www.ecfr.eu](http://www.ecfr.eu).



Vessela Tcherneva

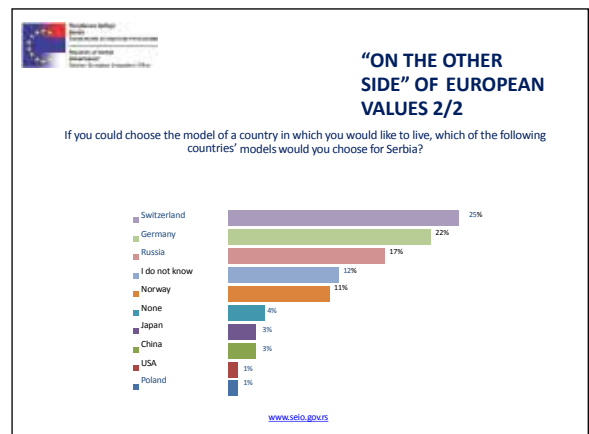
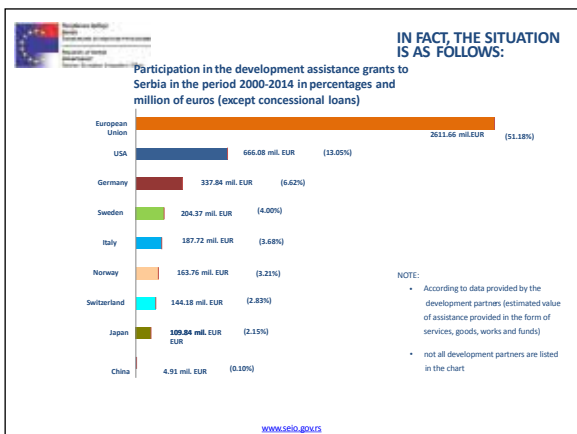
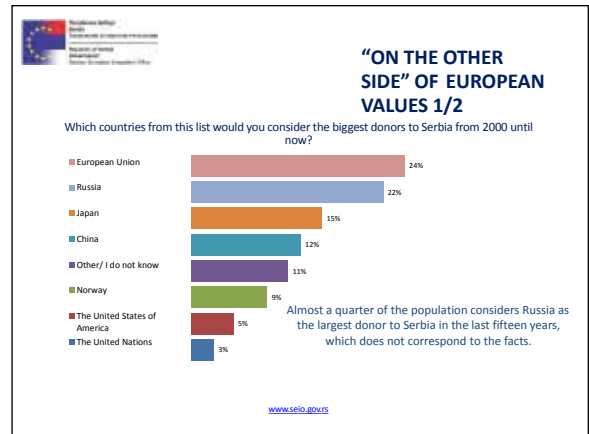
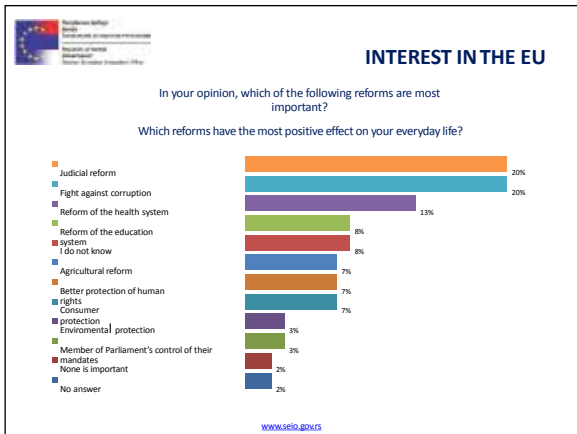
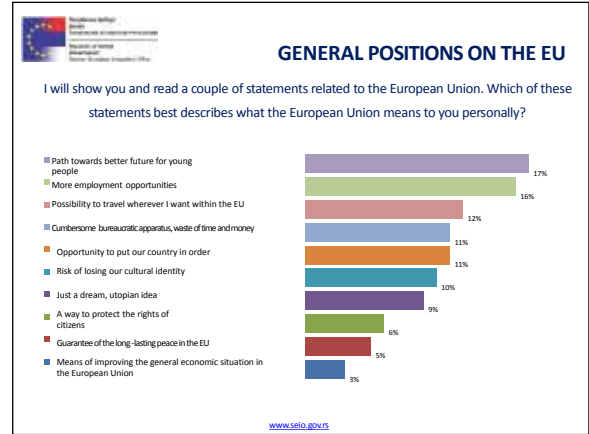
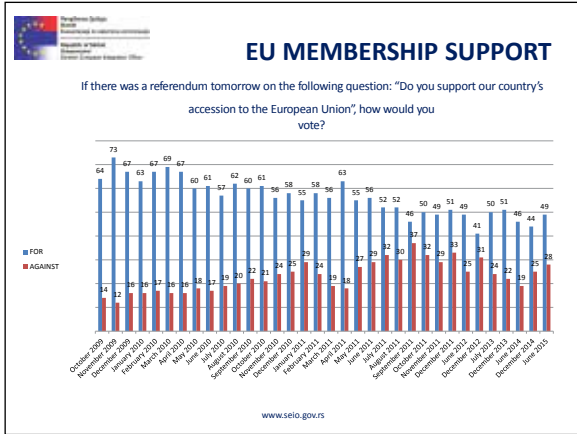
Programme Director, European Council on Foreign Relations, London

Studied at Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität in Bonn (Master degree in political science). 2000-2003 Political Officer at the Bulgarian embassy in Washington D.C. Since 2003 Program Director for Foreign Policy Studies at the Centre for Liberal Strategies. Since 2005 Supervising Editor of the “Foreign Policy–Bulgaria” magazine. 2004-2006 Secretary of the International Commission on the Balkans, chaired by former Italian Prime Minister Giuliano Amato. 2008-2010 Head of the Sofia office and Senior Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations. 2010-2013 Spokesperson of the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and member of the political cabinet of Foreign Minister Nikolay Mladenov. Since 2013 Director of the Wider Europe programme in the European Council on Foreign relations. Vessela is an expert on Foreign and Security policy, transatlantic Relations, Regional Studies, EU enlargement, Balkans and the Black Sea region.



# Promotion of European values in a digital world

By Ivana Đurić



### E-course on Negotiations

1. Uvod u pregovore  
 2. Uvod u pregovore  
 3. Uvod u pregovore  
 4. Uvod u pregovore  
 5. Uvod u pregovore  
 6. Uvod u pregovore  
 7. Uvod u pregovore  
 8. Uvod u pregovore  
 9. Uvod u pregovore  
 10. Uvod u pregovore  
 11. Uvod u pregovore  
 12. Uvod u pregovore  
 13. Uvod u pregovore  
 14. Uvod u pregovore  
 15. Uvod u pregovore  
 16. Uvod u pregovore  
 17. Uvod u pregovore  
 18. Uvod u pregovore

### Why is digital important?

- Reach your audience after you recognize where it is

- Evropa za poneti – Android application
- Turning to mobile platforms as one of the contemporary communication trends

# Serbian citizens' support to EU membership

By Ivana Đurić

It has been already six months since the Club of Venice conference in Sofia. In the meanwhile, there was another regular public opinion poll "Serbian Citizens' Attitude towards the EU" conducted in mid-June by the Serbian European Integration Office /SEIO/, and we decided to present here the newest results obtained through this survey. However, the facts and figures presented in Sofia in March are somewhat similar to the new one, therefore the narrative itself will not be significantly altered.

Serbian citizens support the European integration of Serbia and for many of them the EU membership is the path to a better future for young people, with more employment opportunities and building a state structure that guarantees fight against corruption, better education, as well as more efficient judiciary and health system.

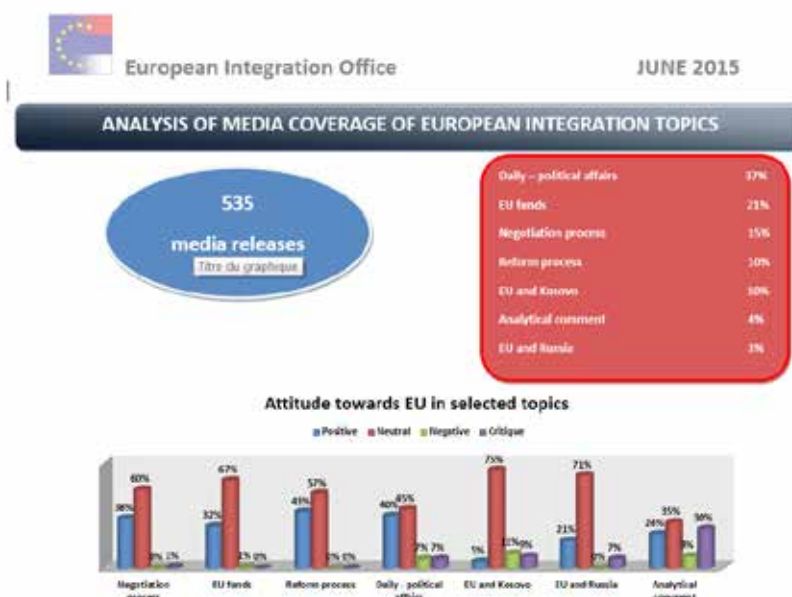
However, at the moment when Serbian Government is expecting the opening of the first negotiating chapters, it is obvious that it is somewhat necessary to use digital channels of communication, in addition to the old, "traditional" media. In this manner, there is a spacious communication field that can be filled in with more effective, efficient and more consistent public information about those specific issues "requested" by the audience through public polls survey. The European Integration Office has been regularly conducting those public polls since 2002 according to Eurobarometer standard and the results obtained through these surveys are being used as a basis for building our communications towards Serbia's path to the EU.

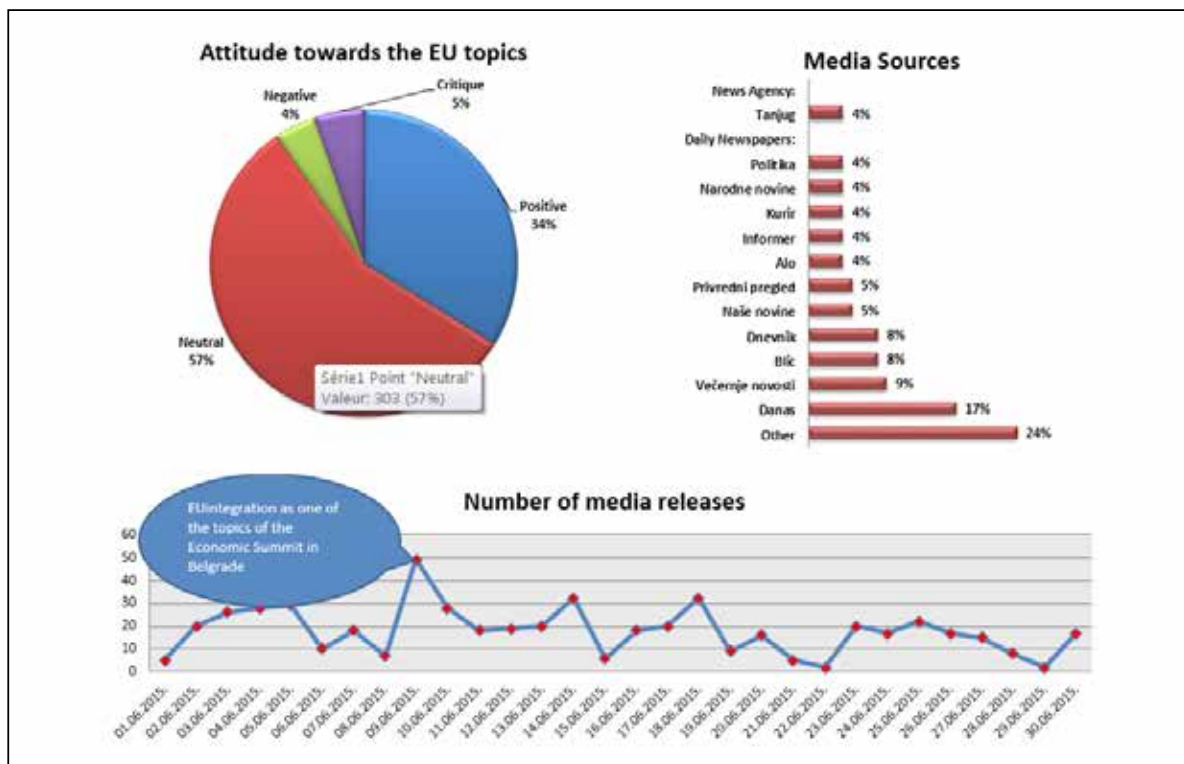
Digital platforms are recognized among communication experts in Serbia as the ones with rapidly growing importance for government communications. Facebook, Twitter and other social media networks, e - courses, applications etc. are used in our case as channels that enable the government to make

the information about its main objectives in the field of European integration immediately available to the citizens. It is in the intrinsic nature of digital media that the information shared across the web are easily accessible and there are numerous ways of inscription of information through different formats - that is why SEIO tends to use this kind of communication in order to help all of the interested audiences to find the answers to their questions and doubts, to recognize why the EU membership would be good for them and their families. On the outskirts of these efforts there are also successful attempts to shatter the myths about the EU that are based on distorted facts or inaccurate and misleading information, very much present in Serbian public. The greatest advantage of digital media is exactly the offered opportunity for communicator to place and spread the information in an unambiguous way, without any intermediaries, narrowing it down to its original and clear meaning.

All of the above mentioned becomes particularly important after taking an analytical look at the facts included in the document graphically outlining SEIO's internal monthly analysis of Serbian traditional media coverage of the EU issues, which is enclosed hereto. Namely, it is obvious that there is a big "noise" in the media about those topics /predominantly in daily newspapers and almost insignificantly in main TV formats/, but the content itself still doesn't offer the information that citizens are seeking for - stories about the experiences of ordinary citizens in the accession process, very specific topics such as youth and social policies, consumer protection and experts' debates. Having this in mind, going digital seems to mean going approachable, appealing and closer to the citizens' pursuance.

35





**Ivana Đurić**

Graduated from the Faculty of Law of the University of Belgrade. Worked for five years in the daily newspaper Borba as a journalist and editor, first in the Belgrade desk and afterwards in the foreign politics desk. From 1998 to 2002 she worked at the Federal Secretariat of Information, first as junior advisor and then as an advisor and she was in charge of public relations for the Deputy Prime Minister's Cabinet and the Cabinet of the Minister of International Economic Relations. When the Serbia and Montenegro's EU Integration Office was established in 2002, up to 2004, she was head

of the Group for Democratisation and Human Rights. At the Serbian European Integration Office, since 2004, she was in charge of implementing the Communication Strategy in the European Integration Process, as a senior advisor, and head of the Section for Communication, Training and Support in the Accession Process. In July 2011, she was appointed assistant director for communication and training. From 2009 to 2011 she was the representative of the Republic of Serbia in the Supervisory Board of the Regional School of Public Administration (RESPA).

During 2001 she worked as an intern in public relations offices of several institutions of the USA Government, as a Freedom House scholarship holder. In 2006 she attended the training programme at the Academy of Government Communications of the Ministry of General and Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. In 2014 she was seconded to the Cabinet Office, within the Government Communication Service which is the professional body for people working in communication roles across UK Government.

# midwives4all, global campaign of the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs

By Kent Öberg

**Public diplomacy is becoming increasingly important in today's world. And even more so in a digitised world. This is why we need to create networks where a range of actors outside traditional diplomatic circles can get together. When citizens, civil society groups, experts, practitioners, and governments meet, things really happen.**

On Monday 23 February, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs launched a global campaign: midwives4all. The campaign is promoting greater engagement and a broader discussion on why we need to invest in midwives. Midwives4all is part of the Swedish Government's ambition to conduct a feminist foreign policy aimed at strengthening women's rights, improving women's access to resources and increasing women's representation. Midwives4all makes a concrete contribution to these overall objectives.

The logo for 'midwives4all' features the word 'midwives' in a lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. Above the 'i' in 'midwives' are three black circles of varying sizes, arranged in a slight arc. To the right of 'midwives' is the number '4all' in a larger, bold, sans-serif font.

## Why midwives in particular

Why midwives, you may wonder. Well, here's why:

1. In 2013 alone, almost 300 000 women died from complications related to pregnancy.
2. Every year, nearly 3 million infants die in the first month of life and 2.6 million babies are stillborn.
3. The vast majority of these women and children lose their lives due to complications and illnesses that could be prevented.

It's obvious that thousands of lives could be saved every year if more qualified midwives and health professionals could work side by side. Focusing on midwives (including financially) is effective. According to the WHO, investing in midwives would yield a 16-fold return.

## What we want to do

The aim of midwives4all is to get more people, organisations and stakeholders to discuss the benefits of midwifery services. We want to ensure that more people have access to a midwife when they need one, and to raise awareness of what a midwife is and can do.

We wanted to create a project that would focus on a concrete part of the concept to make it engaging and understandable and so achieve commitment in already existing networks and create new ones, both globally through our digital channels and at a local level.

The idea came when we were trying to find a way to communicate the concept of a "feminist foreign policy". How do you do that? Our answer is "you don't". It is much too complex and abstract to get the message through. So what we did was to try to find an idea that could carry the concept of a feminist foreign policy, but in a comprehensible format.

## How we are doing it

Midwives4all brings together networks and doers from different fields. The platform 'midwives4all' is in itself designed to work as an infrastructure and ecosystem for conversation beyond the acronyms. Together, we will draw on our networks to innovate, share knowledge and have an impact. In order to overcome barriers that prevent change we want to bring together citizens, NGOs, midwives, policymakers and doers, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by various information technologies, which are the backbone of the global village.

By using a network of digital channels and platforms, we are stimulating debate and increasing awareness about the vital role that midwives can play. This digital initiative helps spread the message around the world. And it gives all those who are already engaged in the issue a common platform for sharing knowledge, experience, information and much more.

With all the tools on the internet it does not have to cost a lot to set up these networks. By using facebook, facebook.com/midwives4all, and Twitter, twitter.com/midwives4all, we got a large part of the digital platform for no cost at all. We paid less than EUR 50 for a website, midwives4all.org, and that was all.

But working digitally isn't enough. We want to engage actors and doers on the ground and at local level, where the problems are. So we are holding workshops and seminars at a number of embassies for the organisations and people we have succeeded in engaging through the digital campaign.

These get-togethers are where the bright ideas are born, and where the local conditions can be taken into account. Participants in these seminars are all the actors I named at the start.



## Progress of the campaign

The project has a four-part implementation plan:

1. an online campaign celebrating midwifery through storytelling;
2. a blog relay sharing best practice;
3. a) ideation workshop in London in March, at which ideas and people from different fields are brought together to find innovative solutions;  
b) co-creative events around the globe, involving Sweden's embassies and other stakeholders, to identify the challenges, barriers and solutions for getting every woman a midwife. Events are being planned in Afghanistan, Angola, Bangladesh, Guatemala, Mozambique, Uganda, the United Kingdom and Zambia.

These events will explore specific local aspects of the issue, using workshops to come up with concrete ideas; and

4. the initiation of a stakeholder-supported phase to sustain the platform.

So, the digital component of midwives4all functions as a global network to highlight the issue. Then we bring it back to the local level, where we aim to find practical solutions.

In other words, the digital platform and the face-to-face meetings work *together* to bring the change.

### Is this how the Swedish MFA usually works?

We take digital developments seriously and we believe in the power of networks to create change. We have previously arranged the Stockholm Internet Forum and started the Stockholm Initiative for Digital Diplomacy. Our embassy in London also created a platform called Diplohack in collaboration with their Dutch counterparts.

Co-creation, a method used in our public and digital diplomacy, is at the core of this project.

### Who is behind the campaign?

The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs is behind this initiative, working closely with Sida, the team behind The Lancet's evidence-based series on midwifery and other actors in the field. The project is led by a team at the Ministry's Communications Department. We want as many actors as possible to get involved. We view this as an open platform, where everyone is invited to collaborate.

38



#### Kent Öberg

Studied engineering until 1987 and played music until 1997.

Took a Master's degree in International communications at Örebro universitet, 2000.

Working with media relations and strategic communication at the Government's Offices since 2003 and at the MFA since 2005.

## Links

Website

<http://midwives4all.org/>

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/midwives4all>

Facebook

<facebook.com/midwives4all>

Article (Swedish Foreign Policy News)

<http://www.swemfa.se/2015/03/19/sweden-wants-to-see-skilled-care-at-every-birth/>

Article (Swedish Foreign Policy News)

<http://www.swemfa.se/2015/02/23/midwives4all/>

Article (Huffington Post)

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/margot-wallstrom/midwives4all-professional\\_b\\_6827242.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/margot-wallstrom/midwives4all-professional_b_6827242.html)

Article (African Woman Magazine)

<http://africanwomanmagazine.net/latest/midwives-4-all-launched-in-uganda/>

Article (New Vision)

<http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/666848-swedish-embassy-starts-campaign-to-promote-midwives.html>

Article (New Vision)

<http://www.newvision.co.ug/news/666880-midwives-critical-in-improving-maternal-child-health--mrs-museveni.html>

# Plenary Meeting of the Club

Vienna, June 2015

How do we start...



# Security, Crisis Management and Transatlantic Trade and Investments

Vienna's Club of Venice plenary on 11/12 June focused on today's tough communication challenges

By Vincenzo Le Voci

Vienna's meeting was devoted to the communication aspects of counter-terrorism, sharing social media best practices in the field of crisis communication and exchanging views on the possible development of communication activities in the field of TTIP

Attendance: 55 (24 Member States and 2 candidate countries (RS and BiH), Council, European Parliament, European Commission and European Central Bank.

## Communication aspects of counter-terrorism

40

The session was moderated by Mr Claus Hörr, Director for Press and Information at the Federal Press Service of the Austrian Federal Chancellery.

The key-note by Ms Edit Schlaffer, from the Vienna-based NGO Women Without Borders (SAVE), focused on the role of mothers in families facing radicalisation and the foreign fighters' phenomenon, in particular in Europe, in Indonesia and in the Palestinian Territories.

The EU CTC representative Christiane Hoehn gave a presentation on the European efforts in counter-terrorism, which included a global picture of the situation and in particular the question of foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq, as well as the communication capacities of Daesh, notably on social media, video production and other media and magazines.

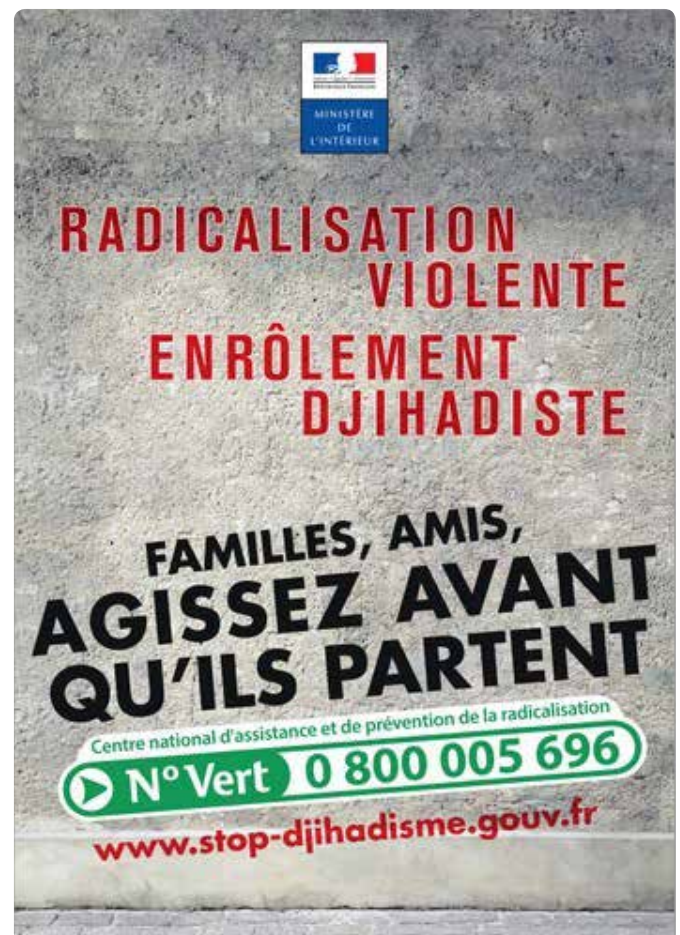
Christiane underlined that countering terrorism is the responsibility of EU member states, the EU itself being able to support their policies (ref. to the 2006 "Implementation of the Radicalisation and Recruitment Action Plan - Media Communication Strategy" (Council doc 10388/06 RESTREINT UE).

The CTC representative welcomed the discussion within the Club framework. She highlighted today's sophisticated approach of terrorist organisations in communications, based on a combination of elements such as a social media strategy, branding initiatives, inspiration instilled in the young generation in Europe and beyond, and stressed the need to step up on joint efforts of governments and institutions in communicating efficiently and proactively as part of the global strategy to contrast terrorism. In her contribution, she outlined the multi-faceted challenges in this field and what is currently being done at EU and international level (policy-wise and networking).

Christiane formulated some suggestions on how to develop effective communication synergies, challenging the extremist ideologies by focusing on preventive factors such as implementing the media communication strategy and the anti-radicalisation and recruitment strategy (including guidelines, common lexicon, creation of receptive societal contexts, detecting and removing terrorism-related content from on line platforms...), communicating norms and values, and strengthening and supporting moderate voices.

With regard to support available to the national authorities (awareness raising, knowledge sharing, advisory services), Christiane quoted the Syria Strategic Communication Advisory Team (SSCAT) and its network, the EUROPOL multi-linguistic monitoring on Internet and the Radicalisation Awareness Network (RAN) and suggested to take into account the best practices from EU MS such as FR and UK.

SSCAT representatives then gave a statement on the Team's ad-







visory activity at the service of EU member states, focusing on undermining the recruitment of foreign fighters and providing an overview of Daesh communication strategies, with a particular focus on its branding strategic approach.

A discussion took place on counter-terrorism and communication, with interventions from Germany (comprehensive/inclusive approach of federal and local authorities), Spain (overview of its communication policy and prevention and digital diplomacy-related activities) and France ("*Stop djihadisme*" video clip and toolkit released immediately after the January attacks, with thorough advance preparation with experts and NGOs, and the involvement of social media such as Facebook, Google and Twitter).

**The way forward:** our society can get prepared to contrast this phenomenon effectively only by increasingly applying an integrated methodology. There is a need to build community management actions with the support of analysts, researchers and civil society, choose the right NGOs, make use of SSCAT advisory services, reinforce networking, exchange on best practice among Member States, monitor effectiveness and measure impact.

## Crisis communication

The session was moderated by Erik Den Hoedt, Director of the Public Information and Communication Office of the Ministry of General Affairs (office of the NL Prime Minister).

The keynote of Ellis D. Hazendonk, senior communication advisor at the Communication Unit of the NL National Crisis Center (NCTV), focused on the Dutch crisis management and crisis communication structures and on the use of social media in this framework.

NL highlighted the good practice of cross-governmental and interagency coordination, combined with a close national-local cooperation, and Dutch population's interest in following social media to keep informed in this field as well. The particularity of the NCTV is its ability to anticipate the reaction of the population or of influencers on social media and to provide an inter-agency (cross-governmental, local and national) response.

In this session the Club had the opportunity to hear from the newly appointed Greek Secretary-General for Information and Communication an update on the effect of the economic crisis on his country ("*Re-thinking and Re-branding Greece*" internally and abroad).

François Théron, from the Civil Protection Directorate-General of the Council's General Secretariat, outlined principles, scope, working methods and objectives of the Inter-institutional Political Crisis Response mechanisms (IPCR) and its links with the "solidarity clause", focusing on message preparation and interaction with national crisis communication strategies - in particular in affected member states. The role of the informal network of IPCR crisis communicators - and the need to reinforce it also through the support of the Club of Venice members - were also underlined, in order to increasingly share best practices, develop in advance long-lasting strategic synergies and facilitate connections and mutual exchange of expertise and best practice among the IPCR's members.

**The way forward:** continue to professionalise crisis communication in all aspects; facilitate the work of the so-called "national action centers" in their role as "hubs"; enhance early warning and information management functions; consolidate the organisational role of the key players by reinforcing coordination, enriching training, maintain updated rosters with clearly indicated responsibilities, develop exportable models of action plans with clear objectives and deadlines, privileging whenever possible the interagency approach; remain in contact with all audiences; keep running exercises and set up realistic performance indicators. The Club will continue to develop narrative and share relevant feedback and case studies on this topic in its review "Convergences" and in future thematic seminars.





## TTIP

This session moderated by Verena Nowotny, communication consultant (Gaisberg) and former spokesperson of the Austrian PM Schüssel.

Work was introduced by Lutz Güllner (European Commission, DG Trade, Head of Unit Communication, information and civil society), who described the state of the negotiations of TTIP<sup>1</sup>. Lutz outlined transparency, content, perspectives and most sensitive negotiating issues, recalling the main findings of initial MS' replies to the questionnaire drawn up by the Commission DG TRADE (Council doc. 9932/15) with the aim to become acquainted with the current communication activities carried out at national level in this field. He also stressed the importance of a transparent and objective communication exercise to keep citizens adequately informed about the scope and content of the negotiations.

The session was held following the "design thinking" approach, facilitated by Judit Erlfelder and Sandra Luger (consultants from Gaisberg), which enabled the Club to explore possible new different formats and tools to communicate more effectively on the potential TTIP benefits.

**The way forward:** the Club stands ready to come back to this issue deepening further informal exchanges of best practice and to facilitate intergovernmental synergies and cooperation with the EU institutions in communicating TTIP. The Club will act in complementarity with the Council Working Party on Information.

42

---

<sup>1</sup> At the time of the Club plenary, negotiations were in a stalemate owing to the EP's decision to postpone vote to its July's plenary session. Meanwhile, the EP has voted its resolution and negotiations have reached their 10<sup>th</sup> round.





#### **VIENNA ANNOUNCEMENT – CHANGES IN THE CLUB STEERING GROUP**

After Beate Grzeski (Germany, MFA Director for International Academic Relations and Public Diplomacy) in November 2014, the Club welcomed in June 2015 four new members in its Steering Group: Arlin Bagdat (Belgium, Director-General of the External Communication, Chancellery of the Prime Minister), Fiorenza Barazzoni (Italy, Head of the Office for Internal Market and Competitiveness, PM Office Department for European Policies), Nathalie Chevanon (France, Deputy Director of the Government Information Service) and Lefteris Kretsos (Greece, Secretary-General for Information and Communication).



# Déclaration d'ouverture

Par Stefano Rolando

Mesdames et messieurs,  
chers représentants du Gouvernement autrichien,  
Cher Claus,

Me voilà à Vienne après sept ans, avec l'émotion suscitée par cette belle ville, ancienne capitale d'une histoire constitutive de la culture européenne.

Merci tout d'abord, au nom de tous les participants, à ceux qui ont rendu possible l'organisation de cette réunion, ainsi qu'aux interprètes, aux participants eux-mêmes et aux collègues qui prendront la parole pour partager leurs connaissances durant cette plénière.

Je voudrais articuler mon discours d'ouverture autour de trois concepts de base, qui offrent un cadre aux thèmes principaux du programme de notre rencontre et permettent de prendre la température de la communication publique en Europe et de son évolution.

44

1. Dans le programme, **deux thèmes dominant : la communication sur le terrorisme** (l'arme « terriblement efficace » de ceux qui utilisent la violence au mépris de toutes règles internationales) et le rôle de la **communication dans la gestion des situation de crise**.

La combinaison de ces deux éléments – qui obligent toujours davantage les autorités gouvernementales et institutionnelles à y réserver une attention soutenue – témoigne du changement structurel intervenant dans la demande de communication publique que font les citoyens.

A ces deux domaines s'ajoute un thème très délicat et complexe : la **communication sur le partenariat transatlantique de commerce et d'investissement entre l'Union européenne et les Etats-Unis**.

Des recherches sociologiques nous ont révélé que des préoccupations majeures partagées dans l'opinion publique (environnement, durabilité, travail, emploi, investissements, culture, éducation, santé) reculent au profit de **vagues émotionnelles** causées par la peur et le besoin élémentaire de sécurité. Dans ce troisième domaine, ce qu'on appelle le **TTIP**, l'incertitude découle de la méfiance d'une partie de l'opinion publique vis-à-vis des partenaires et des négociateurs.

Je ne veux pas, bien entendu, sous-estimer ni les faits donnant lieu à ce processus, ni les raisons de cette évolution.

Ces raisons et ces faits sont graves et importants pour l'Europe. On ne peut pas rester inactifs ou insensibles face aux actes de terrorisme perpétrés à l'intérieur de nos pays, aux conflits dangereux aux frontières de l'Europe, aux expé-

riences migratoires qui se transforment en catastrophes humanitaires, couplées à des tragédies causées par la violence des catastrophes naturelles. De même, nous ne pouvons que multiplier nos efforts pour soutenir les acteurs dans leurs efforts de transparence et de communication sur ces négociations internationales, qui sont très importantes pour l'avenir de l'Union européenne.

Toutefois, permettez-moi de souligner que les faits de l'actualité nous poussent à développer des stratégies et des actions dans ce contexte qui ont pour but de conforter et de rassurer l'opinion publique, mais qui, très souvent, ne constituent pas des véritables *programmes ou campagnes d'information*. Il faut également souligner que les instances nationales qui choisissent de dire essentiellement la vérité et de créer dans la conscience collective un rempart culturel, de partage et de défense des valeurs démocratiques, ne sont pas nombreuses.

Il y a, certes, des traditions positives à cet égard dans certains pays d'Europe, mais les évolutions récentes ont mis en évidence une **polarisation croissante entre des médias alarmistes** (insistant sur le côté spectaculaire de l'information afin de capter le public) **et la minimisation opérée par des institutions** (afin de limiter les réactions fondées sur l'émotion et de contrer les tentatives de récupération partisane de celles-ci qui font se déplacer le centre de gravité du débat politique vers la seule question de la sécurité).

Il ne m'appartient pas de donner des réponses à cette tendance. Mais, comme d'habitude, le Club de Venise pourra discuter des **questions de responsabilité professionnelle** que ces situations posent.

2. Pour ce qui est de la communication institutionnelle, nous avons beaucoup insisté sur la nécessité pour l'Europe d'être capable **d'adopter de façon appropriée une perception intégrée et synchronisée du rôle de communicateur public, et donc d'avoir une approche commune avancée qui puisse donner corps à un statut professionnel des communicateurs des Etats membres de l'Union**.

Il faudrait travailler ensemble à la **création de standards** qui soient respectueux des besoins des États membres et auxquels ils pourraient souscrire, tout en garantissant la qualité civile et sociale de l'information au bénéfice des citoyens et de leurs droits. Ce point est très important et directement lié aux thèmes de notre réunion plénière; ceci implique également l'établissement de standards grâce auxquels on peut **garantir le contrôle de qualité des activités d'information et de communication**.



Aujourd'hui la communication sur le terrorisme et sur les situations de crise est en train de voguer entre une certaine **qualité et vitesse de l'information** (ce qui suscite intérêt, participation et interaction) et des risques évidents de **propagande** accentués par ceux qui détiennent le pouvoir des médias. Les médias restent toujours les arbitres de l'émotivité collective et individuelle – et ce phénomène peut conduire bien sûr à la manipulation politique.

Dans ce contexte, il faut s'engager dans une bataille culturelle et professionnelle dont nous avons discuté à maintes reprises. **La communication institutionnelle doit être basée davantage sur des statistiques claires et concrètes et non pas sur les sondages**, car la réalité et son évolution se révèlent très souvent différentes de leur perception.

3. Pour conclure, je voudrais attirer votre attention sur le **développement de la communication publique** en Europe. En octobre aura lieu à Bruxelles l'édition 2015 d'EuroPCom, un événement qui se focalise sur la sensibilité des jeunes engagés autour de l'idée de l'Europe.

De même, nous aurons **notre session plénière d'automne**, prévue cette année à Milan à l'occasion de **l'Exposition universelle**. Comme vous le savez, EXPO 2015 est consacrée à un thème crucial pour la communication publique de la planète, le **droit à l'alimentation**, qui renvoi nécessairement à la **problématique des inégalités**.

Dans ce contexte, je souhaite vous inviter à une toute dernière réflexion. En septembre 2014, à l'occasion de l'ouverture de la conférence sur « *La Promesse de l'UE* » (*The Promise of the EU*) consacrée aux espoirs d'une nouvelle communication sur l'idée de l'Europe, j'ai fait remarquer, comme je l'ai mis en exergue à plusieurs reprises au sein du *Club de Venise*, que la moitié des citoyens et des gouvernements européens pense que **l'identité de l'Europe est le marché**, tandis que l'autre moitié pense que cette identité est surtout une **identité politique** (*Eurobaromètre 2014*).

Pourquoi dans l'histoire, des politiciens sont parfois appelés « *hommes d'Etat* » ? Parce que certains d'entre eux ont été capables de donner des réponses à des questions particulièrement difficiles.

Dans son célèbre discours du 9 mai 1950, Robert Schuman a donné des réponses, qui se sont révélées correctes, à une question difficile : comment est-il possible que ceux qui se faisaient la guerre pendant des siècles construisent désormais les conditions incontournables de la paix ? Suivant son approche, cela nécessite de créer une véritable « *ingénierie* »

(la même qui est utilisée pour construire des ponts) pour favoriser et établir **les conditions d'un rapprochement durable dans l'intérêt commun et de chacun**.

Une politique de communication européenne sera mise en œuvre seulement à partir du moment où ces ponts seront établis et où nous aurons à en faire la communication. Malheureusement, au cours de ces derniers dix mois il n'y a pas eu de changements substantiels en la matière ; mais **nous ne perdons pas l'espoir et entretenons cet esprit**. Sans un nouveau cadre politique favorable, ce projet global restera un travail lourd et lent.



**Stefano Rolando**

Président Club de Venise

Professeur à la Faculté des sciences de la communication, Université de Milan Iulm. Ancien directeur général de l'Information de la Présidence du Conseil des Ministres du gouvernement italien.



# Mothers: The Key Security Ally

By Edit Schlaffer

There is a global wake-up call surrounding the current counter violent extremism (CVE) approach; the international community is becoming increasingly alarmed as we watch the number of foreign fighters traveling to Syria grow each month. The reactive investment in counter insurgencies and direct military intervention have failed to produce the intended outcomes and, in many cases have resulted in a backlash. Furthermore, civil society is often not involved in prevention efforts, which worryingly excludes those who are closest and best placed to have an impact. This is precisely where we must take our next steps. We must invest in communities to gain trust and strengthen their capacity to make a difference right where extremist ideologies and recruiters target first: the individual, embedded within a family and community. Traveling through regions targeted by violent extremism, it became obvious that families need to come together and build resilience from the ground up. The family, and mothers in particular, have an important role to play in creating the social fabric that is resistant to radical influences.

46

In 2013, Women without Borders conducted the first-ever study exploring the role of mothers in addressing violent extremism, surveying 1023 mothers across Pakistan, Israel, Palestine, Northern Ireland and Nigeria in 2013. The study reflects the subjective understanding of mothers on the existence and proliferation of violent extremism as they experience it in the context of their families, communities and, most importantly, in the lives of their children. Their concerns provide a unique insight into the intimate geography of the preliminary stages of radicalization, helping to fill a crucial gap in the current understanding of the problem of extremism. In their unique position of access and proximity to their children, mothers are an unrecognized source for deepening our understanding of risk factors and a key partner in developing preventative, counter-violence strategies. The data were gathered around the following central topics:

- What is happening at the individual level during the process of radicalization?
- What are the social and psychological factors involved in the process?
- How can family members be better equipped to act as an effective countering force?

The key questions addressed in this study were:

- To what extent are mothers, especially in at-risk communities, aware of the dangers of extremist recruitment?
- What are mothers' perceptions of why youth become radicalized?
- What do mothers see as their current role and/or the role they can play in the prevention of violent extremism on the home front?
- What are the barriers that prevent mothers from serving in this role?

## Key Findings

An analysis of qualitative and quantitative data collected from a total of 1023 mothers yielded the following findings:

Overall there was a general consensus among mothers across all five regions regarding perceptions of a mother's role in countering extremist influences. The data from both the interviews and the surveys strongly conveyed the mothers' concerns about the risk of their children becoming radicalized and a majority of mothers expressed confidence in their own abilities to 1) prevent their children from becoming involved with violent extremism in the first place and 2) to recognize early warning signs if they did, in fact, arise. Moreover, in many of the interviews the mothers expressed a sense of urgency and eagerness to organize with similarly concerned mothers to collaborate in combatting this growing problem of extremist recruitment.

Below the findings are grouped into mothers' **TRUSTS, FEARS and NEEDS**:

### *What Do Mothers Fear in Regards to Radicalization?*

According to the interviewed and surveyed mothers the strongest sources of radicalization are:

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| ▪ The internet                               | (78 percent of mothers agree) |
| ▪ The influence of radical religious leaders | (78 percent of mothers agree) |
| ▪ Messages disseminated through television   | (76 percent of mothers agree) |
| ▪ The role of political organizations        | (76 percent of mothers agree) |
| ▪ The role of religious groups               | (65 percent of mothers agree) |

### Mothers' Perceptions of Why Children Become Radicalized?

Mothers specifically consider the following as risk factors:

- A desire for revenge (73 percent of mothers)
- Community instability (68 percent of mothers)
- Vulnerability to peer pressure (66 percent of mothers)
- Trauma and/or loss (63 percent of mothers)
- Self-isolation (48 percent of mothers)

### Whom Do Mothers Trust?

The data convey that there is general trust given by the women to themselves, other mothers, their families, and members of their immediate social circle to play a positive role in protecting their children from extremist influences. However, a level of skepticism emerges regarding children's relationships with people outside the family's immediate social environment. This remains consistent when controlling for education and the level of children's involvement in extremist activities.

A hierarchy of trust emerged from the women's communicated perceptions about who counteracts extremist influences:

#### Trust intact

- Trust mothers (94 percent of mothers)
- Trust fathers (91 percent of mothers)
- Trust immediate family members and other relatives (81 percent of mothers)
- Trust teachers (79 percent of mothers)
- Trust friends (74 percent of mothers)
- [Trust religious leaders (58 percent of mothers)]

#### Trust Gap

- Trust the police (39 percent of mothers)
- Trust international organizations (36 percent of mothers)
- Trust the army (35 percent of mothers)
- Trust local councils (34 percent of mothers)
- Trust the government (29 percent of mothers)

This gap indicates that only 1 out of 3 mothers would seek help outside of their families and/or immediate social circles. This trust disparity between the public and private spheres has important implications for developing effective security strategies.

### What Do Mothers Request?

While the interviewed and surveyed mothers generally believe that they have the potential to be a preventative force, they also believe that their own capacity to effectively protect their children is dependent on having the following supports:

- Increased knowledge of early-warning signs (86 percent of mothers)
- Self-confidence training (84 percent of mothers)
- Parenting skills training (80 percent of mothers)
- Meetings with other mothers (80 percent of mothers)
- More general education (80 percent of mothers)
- Knowledge of religion (79 percent of mothers)
- Support from social organizations (76 percent of mothers)

## Applying the Findings: The Mothers School Model

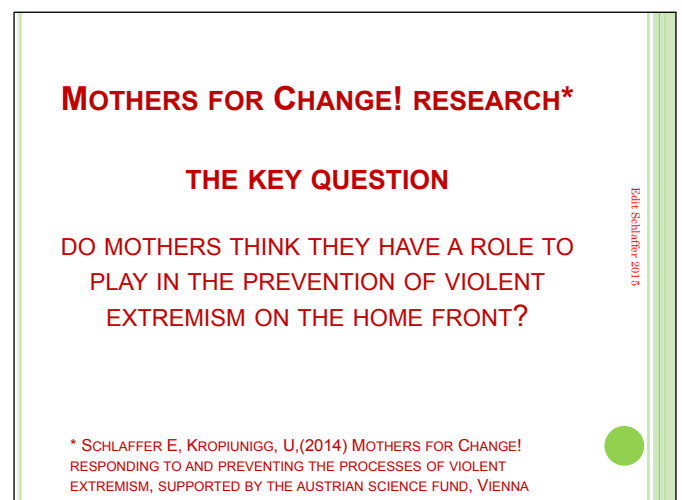
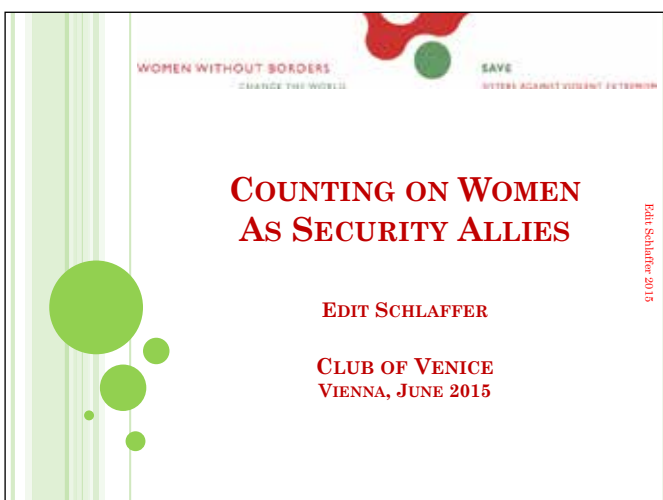
From this data, we draw important conclusions about how to fill the existing gaps in the local, national, and international approaches to countering violent extremism. Mothers, as a continuous presence in their children's lives, with deeply-rooted connections and an understanding of push and pull factors: of what excites them, upsets them, and what might seduce them into a community of violence, must be recognized, supported, and engaged in order to build effective counter violent extremism strategies.

Women without Borders developed the Mothers School model to serve this urgent security need. It seeks out mothers as an embedded security ally and arms them with the skills to be effective as the foundation of community resilience. The Mothers School curriculum has been designed to strengthen individual capability, emotional literacy, and awareness of extremist influences to both empower and enable mothers to effectively prevent and confront this growing threat. This model creates a formalized space where mothers improve their knowledge of early warning signs and strategize how to be effective barriers to radical influences.

Since 2013, Women without Borders has been running Mothers Schools across six regions targeted by violent extremism including Indonesia, India, Kashmir, Pakistan, Nigeria, Zanzibar, and Tajikistan. The model will travel to Europe this year to address the ongoing foreign fighter phenomenon, with Mothers Schools beginning in Belgium and Austria in the fall of 2015, and spreading to France, Sweden and UK thereafter.

Women without Borders envisions a global Mothers School Movement to bring the model to all regions at-risk, establishing bottom-up security and institutionalizing resiliency. Eventually, the aim of this integrated approach is to enable and engage enough individuals to effectively safeguard children throughout their development, so that extremist ideologies eventually lose their lure. The global movement works to build a united front against the manipulation and use of our children for violent means that threatens all levels of our social fabric.

48



THE STUDY CRITICALLY ASSESSES THE ROLE OF MOTHERS IN PREVENTING AND REACTING TO RADICALIZATION

TARGET COUNTRIES INCLUDED IN THE STUDY: PALESTINE, PAKISTAN, ISRAEL, NIGERIA, AND NORTHERN IRELAND

SAMPLE: N=1023

COMBINED QUALITATIVE-QUANTITATIVE METHODOLOGY: 50 INTERVIEWS PER COUNTRY AND SURVEYS OF 1,023 MOTHERS

Eilat Schindler 2015



## THE STUDY REFLECTS THE SUBJECTIVE UNDERSTANDING OF MOTHERS...

CONCERNING

- THE CAUSES OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM
- THE FEARS OF RADICALIZATION
- THE CHALLENGES IN ADDRESSING THE THREAT ..IN THEIR FAMILIES, AND PARTICULARLY IN THE LIVES OF THEIR CHILDREN

Eilat Schindler 2015



Study's statistics: see the above narrative

## MOTHERS ARE READY!

WHAT MOTHERS NEED TO EFFECTIVELY SAFEGUARD THEIR CHILDREN:

- CONFIDENCE BUILDING
- TARGETED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS IN RECOGNIZING EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF RADICALIZATION
- COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Eilat Schindler 2015



SAVE CREATED THE MOTHERS SCHOOL MODEL

49

## THE MOTHERS SCHOOL: MODEL

- LOCAL MOBILIZERS REACH OUT TO CONCERNED MOTHERS OF ADOLESCENTS AT-RISK
- GROUP PLATFORM BUILDS SELF-CONFIDENCE TO SPEAK OUT
- SENSITIZES MOTHERS TO RECOGNIZE EARLY WARNINGS SIGNS
- TRAINS MOTHERS HOW TO REACT
- PROVIDES SUPPORT AND KEY SKILLS

Eilat Schindler 2015



## THE MOTHERS SCHOOL: CURRICULUM

- COVERS 10 THEMES OVER 3 MONTHS
- INCLUDING PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT
- PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHILD DEVELOPMENT
- PARENTING FOR PEACE TRAINING

Eilat Schindler 2015





## THE MOTHERS SCHOOL: MEETINGS



- A SAFE SPACE TO SHARE EXPERIENCES
- MUTUAL SUPPORT AND MOTIVATION
- COLLABORATION FOR LOCAL INITIATIVES

Edit Schaffer 2015

## MOTHER SCHOOLS IMPLEMENTED WITH NATIONAL PARTNERS

WITH TRAINED FACILITATORS IN:  
INDIA KASHMIR PAKISTAN  
TAJIKISTAN INDONESIA  
ZANZIBAR NIGERIA

WITH ONGOING MONITORING AND SUPPORT FROM SAVE

Edit Schaffer 2015

SAVE Mothers change the mindset of their kids at-risk and the spirit of their villages



Edit Schaffer 2015

## MOTHERS VOICES AND SPREADING AWARENESS



TRAINING COMMUNITY RADIO REPORTERS

Edit Schaffer 2015

## MOTHERS SCHOOL OUTREACH SO FAR

- 43 MOTHERS SCHOOLS GROUPS ACROSS 6 REGIONS
- 800 TRAINED MOTHERS



... FATHERS JOIN IN

Edit Schaffer 2015

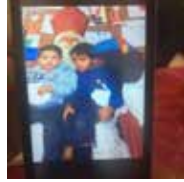
Mothers Schools move to the West creating a European platform of mothers who lost their children to Syria



Edit Schaffer 2015

## Example: a young Belgian Foreign Fighter

- Sophie's son was radicalized in only 3 months
- Lured by a call to action: providing humanitarian aid
- He died in Syria 4 months later
- Sophie is using her experience to help concerned parents recognize and address the early warning signs and preempt departure for Syria



His mother says he wore the same smile on the battlefield

Edith Schlaffer 2015

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- TIME, TRUST, AND CONFIDENCE ARE KEY
- WORK WITH TESTIMONIALS FROM ALL SIDES
- INVOLVE MOTHERS IN REHABILITATION EFFORTS
- RAPID RESPONSE MECHANISMS

Edith Schlaffer 2015



**Edith Schlaffer** is a social scientist, founder of **Women without Borders**, based in Vienna. Her international efforts focus on grassroots, community-based female diplomacy, namely empowering women as agents of change and a critical driving force in stabilizing an insecure world. She launched the Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) campaign, organizing women (and men) internationally to take part in a research-based, family-centered counter-radicalization platform.

Schlaffer's efforts and research focus on gender and counter-terrorism strategies, peace-building through dialogue, and examining the role of civil society in improving the security architecture. In 2013, Schlaffer, in collaboration with Dr. Ulrich Kropiunigg, conducted the first empirical research study into the potential of mothers to recognize early warning signs of

radicalization in their sons and the needed tools to respond effectively. This study was supported by the Austrian Fund for Scientific Research.]

Additionally Schlaffer has produced a number of short films highlighting female change-makers as well as perpetrators and survivors of terrorist acts. Her recent film "Your Mother," features the testimonies of mothers of sons who harmed or intended to harm others in the name of Jihad and is used as an education tool to raise awareness in communities where radicalism is propagated.

Edith Schlaffer writes for news outlets including Huffington Post and Reuters Trust Law blogs, is also the co-author of a books and essays on politics and gender relationships and is a speaker in diverse settings. In 2005 she was awarded the Kaethe Leichter Austrian State Prize for Gender Equality and Research and in 2011 was named one of Newsweeks' "150 Movers and Shakers". In 2010 she was named "21 Leaders of the 21st Century" by Women's eNews. She was also awarded the Aenne Burda Award for Creative Leadership at the 2015 Digital-Life-Design (DLD) Conference in Munich.

Former Director of the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Politics and Interpersonal Relations, Vienna (1980-2001), and Chairperson of the Austrian Foundation for World Population and International Cooperation (2004-2011), Schlaffer holds a doctorate in Communication Science and Sociology from the University of Vienna (1972) and completed psychoanalytical training at the Children's Hospital in Vienna (1986).

# Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) and De-Radicalization – Measures in Germany

By Beate Grzeski

Extremism still poses a considerable threat to German public security. We need to acknowledge that serious threats stem from individuals or very small groups of persons. Thus, high priority is given to countering violent extremism and de-radicalization. In general, radicalization takes place outside of the public sphere or even deliberately concealed from security authorities. Therefore, in particular with regard to the growing indoctrination activities of Salafists, prevention and awareness raising is of increasing importance within our societies as a whole.

A particular focus is put on identifying better ways to prevent young people from becoming radicalized. The same goes for de-radicalization measures addressed to young people who have already been attracted by radical thinking.

German institutions have reacted to these challenges in several ways: in January 2012, Germany set up an “advice centre on radicalization” at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees. It is meant as a first contact point for relatives and friends of young people who already are or are becoming radicalized, to advise them on issues related to Islamist Extremism and radicalization. If necessary, individual personal support by civil-society experts is offered. The aim of such counselling is to rebuild and strengthen the relationship between relatives, friends and radicalized young people to start a de-radicalization process.

-> <http://www.bamf.de/EN/DasBAMF/Clearingstelle/Beratung/beratung.html>

However in the field of prevention and de-radicalization the government is often confronted with a problem of legitimacy: people have reservations against asking the police for help. Therefore stakeholders from civil society as well as social and local institutions need to be supported, as they are much more convincing than government agencies from the perspective of the target group.

The Government - therefore works hand in hand with civil society, religious institutions and leaders and NGOs within a comprehensive approach. There is as an example a “prevention and cooperation clearing point” at the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees which serves as an intermediary between the security authorities of our federal states, the Länder, mosque associations as well as the vast majority of Muslim umbrella organizations.

-> <http://www.bamf.de/EN/DasBAMF/Clearingstelle/clearingstelle-node.html>

Another example of concerted action is the German program “Live Democracy” which aims at sustainability in preventing violent extremism by strengthening civil society structures and actors through funding at the local, regional and federal level.

At the same time, pilot projects are funded in order to develop and field-test innovative approaches towards countering phenomena of group-related hate and violent extremism and advance teaching practice. “Live Democracy!” is also based on an exchange of experiences and support for the youth

Germany takes countering violent extremism and radicalization very seriously. A variety of activities and programs are in place and many actors, on the national as well as on the regional and local level, are actively engaged in CVE and counter-radicalization efforts such as NGOs, community centers and even local police stations.

Nevertheless, there is always room for improvement. Sharing experience with our European partners also in the framework of the Club of Venice will be a further step in effectively countering violent extremism and radicalization. We are facing similar challenges and should learn from each other.



**Beate Grzeski** has worked since 2014 as Director of International Academic Relations, Public Diplomacy and Dialogue among Civilizations for the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where she earned her sound experience filling key positions in her country and abroad, such as Head of the Economic Department in the German Embassy in China, Special Advisor on Economic Affairs during the European Convention negotiations, Director of the Economic Working Table of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe in Brussels, Head of the “Justice and Home Affairs” Division and Advisor on EU Law, and Advisor on Strategic Planning for General Cultural Affairs. She also worked as Private Secretary for the President of the German Bundestag.

Beate has a consolidated education background in Law (State Exams 1st and 2nd degree attended in Munich and Koblenz).

She is one of the members of the Club of Venice Steering Group.

# Panel on counterterrorism:

By Consuelo Femenía

As a contribution to this panel, some areas of the work to prevent and combat violent extremism in Spain were presented:

## 1. At a national level, and *inter alia*,

- Approval of a National Plan against Radicalisation, containing preventive measures of all ministerial departments involved, including action on Internet and Media, and other legislative measures such as the reform of the Penal Code to criminalize acts of incitement to hatred or violence based on religion, anti-Semitism, national origin or race.
- The Observatory for Religious Pluralism is a platform created in 2004 for the public management of religious diversity in Spain. It has been regarded as best practice within the European Union and has received several awards. The Observatory is an electronic tool that includes information concerning different fields of interest for the members of the religious communities and the public institutions competent in matters of religious freedom. It includes a dictionary of religious faiths, legal resources, examples of best practices in the management of religious diversity, surveys about citizens perception of religious freedom, a virtual library and interviews with personalities in this field.
- The "Barometer of the Opinion of the Muslim Community in Spain" for a better understanding of their values in order to eradicate stereotypes, and promote integration and mutual understanding. It makes opinion polls for a better understanding by public administrations of their perceptions, attitudes and values, and the elimination of stereotypes, integration and mutual understanding.
- A permanent feature of Spanish policies against terrorism is to give support and voice to the victims.

## 2. Another area of our work is the support given – as founding or original member- to two international initiatives to promote intercultural and interreligious dialogue: KAIICID and the Alliance of Civilisations.

- KAIICID is the Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue (under the auspices of King Abdullah Bin Abdullaziz; headquarters in Vienna) Its aim is to strengthen the unity against violence in the name of religion. Its session in November 2014 was devoted to support cultural and religious diversity in Iraq and Syria and presented recommendations.

- Alliance of Civilisations – UNAOC – is a UN supported initiative fostered by Spain and Turkey. It has its own Social Media (Twitter and Facebook accounts) and involves eminent personalities in areas of the business sector, academia, arts and literature, politics and religion. Its programmes include different areas, such as education, a fellowship programme, and a Media programme. It has a multifaceted strategy for the promotion of intercultural dialogue.



**Consuelo Femenía**

Senior Advisor for Digital Diplomacy and Communication at the Press Office ("Oficina de Información Diplomática") of the Spanish MFA. Tasked with the development of a Communication plan for the Spanish diplomatic network of Embassies and Consulates, including social media.

Born in 1965. Career Diplomat since 1992. Former Ambassador of Spain to Latvia and former Ambassador at large of Spain for the negotiations of the Arms Trade Treaty. She has been posted in Moscow, Managua and The Hague. Specialist in Development cooperation Aid in Latin America, and in Security Issues in Europe and Euro-Asian region.



# Communication de crise : the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response

By François Théron

*Zu allererst möchte ich mich bei Ihnen für den wunderbaren Empfang bedanken, den Sie uns bei der Plenarsitzung des Clubs von Venedig in Wien bereitet haben.* De même, cette réunion nous donne l'occasion de présenter, pour la première fois devant un public de décideurs du monde de la communication gouvernementale, notre produit, le dispositif européen de réponse politique aux crises, connu sous son acronyme anglais IPCR, pour *EU Integrated Political Crisis Response*.

La communication est l'un des éléments les plus importants de notre dispositif. Elle permet, comme toute communication de crise, de contribuer à l'information du public et participe du retour à une situation normale en termes de continuité d'activité. Dans le cas particulier de l'IPCR, elle permet en plus d'expliquer comment une réponse politique au niveau de l'Union contribue à résoudre la crise ou atténuer ses conséquences.

54

*Dear colleagues, I am going to present the IPCR arrangements in French, but that does not mean that you cannot ask your questions in English. You may even have the answers in English !*

Mais, avant d'aller plus loin, qu'est-ce que ce dispositif, que sont les IPCR ?

Juste un mécanisme simple et souple, visant à soutenir la Présidence et le Conseil en cas de réponse à une crise majeure. Présidence et Conseil de l'Union européenne, c'est-à-dire le niveau inter-gouvernemental, politique et stratégique de l'Union. Le dispositif a été adopté par le Conseil le 23 juin 2013, à la fin de la présidence irlandaise.

Les IPCR visent à améliorer la capacité de réponse politique de l'Union aux crises, en permettant au Conseil de se mobiliser le plus rapidement et le plus efficacement en cas de crise. Les IPCR peuvent être utilisés pour répondre à n'importe quelle crise multisectorielle nécessitant une réponse au niveau de l'Union.

En premier lieu, le dispositif peut être activé quelque soit le lieu où la crise se déroule. La question est plutôt de savoir si la crise touche ou non l'Union, ses Etats membres, ses intérêts. Qui peuvent bien sûr être strictement politiques. La question est celle de la coordination politique de la réponse à la crise, ce qui est particulièrement important lorsqu'elle affecte plusieurs secteurs.

En second lieu, les IPCR ont un lien étroit avec la clause de solidarité, prévue à l'article 222 du traité sur le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne. Je rappelle que cet article prévoit que l'Union et ses Etats membres agissent conjointement dans un esprit de solidarité si un Etat membre est l'objet d'une attaque terroriste ou la victime d'une catastrophe naturelle ou d'origine

humaine. La décision relative à la mise en œuvre de la clause de solidarité, adoptée le 24 juin 2014 par le Conseil, prévoit que les IPCR sont automatiquement activés dès l'invocation de la clause. Cela a pour effet d'intégrer les IPCR dans le mécanisme institutionnel issu de Lisbonne, et de ne pas les limiter au simple cadre d'une décision du Conseil.

Dans quel exemple de crise activerait-on les IPCR ?

- une crise sanitaire aux conséquences majeures sur la continuité d'activité dans l'ensemble de l'Union et dans le reste du monde : par exemple, la crise de la grippe A/H1N1.
- la crise générée par l'éruption du volcan islandais Eyjafjallajökull en 2010 et ses conséquences sur les transports aériens

La Présidence (tournante) prend les commandes, s'il faut activer l'IPCR. Evidemment, cela ne se fait pas sans un certain nombre de prérequis.

- d'abord, la position des Etats membres touchés par la crise, directement ou non. Un attentat terroriste frappe un Etat membre, l'Union exprime sa solidarité au plus haut niveau, mais la Présidence attendra une demande de la part de l'Etat affecté avant de lancer les IPCR. Question de souveraineté.
- le soutien du secrétariat général du Conseil est très important : il fournira tout le soutien logistique, traditionnel au SGC, mais aussi le soutien politique, visant à permettre à la Présidence de gérer la crise dans le respect des procédures et en satisfaisant ses besoins en termes de matière grise. :-) Nous verrons cela un peu plus tard.
- organiser le travail du conseil et piloter la décision : les IPCR sont là pour faciliter cette prise de décision et la rendre la plus efficace possible.

Une fois les IPCR activés, la Présidence dispose de trois outils majeurs :

- tout d'abord, la plate-forme web IPCR : véritable salle de crise virtuelle, elle permet, hors crise, d'assurer la liaison entre parties prenantes, un peu à l'image de votre plate-forme web *Veniconet*. En période de crise, elle permet de centraliser l'information et d'échanger les éléments de situation entre les acteurs impliqués. Hors crise, elle contribue à l'entraînement et à la veille – via les pages de monitoring. Cette plate-forme, qui appartient au Conseil, est gérée par le SGC avec le soutien de la Commission et du SEAE.
- l'*Integrated Situational Awareness and Analysis capacity* sera l'outil permettant de produire des rapports de situation une fois l'IPCR activé. Cet outil est de la responsabilité de la



Commission européenne et du Service européen d'action extérieure (SEAE), qui sont en train de travailler très fort sur le sujet et nous n'allons pas faire de spoiler. :-)

- Les rapports de l'ISAA sont transmis à une table ronde informelle, qui ressemble un peu à un pré-briefing du Coreper, du comité des représentants permanents. La table ronde est pilotée par la Présidence. Elle va préparer, grâce au cycle d'information produit par les rapports ISAA, un certain nombre de propositions d'action sur la crise, sur tous les sujets, y compris la communication, fournies au COREPER, au Conseil, voire au Conseil européen, s'il est besoin d'une orientation au plus haut niveau.

Dans notre contexte particulier, le SGC a donc un rôle majeur aux côtés de la Présidence.

- hors crise, le SGC a un rôle de planification et veille au bon fonctionnement du dispositif : il administre la plate-forme web, comme je l'ai déjà dit, il organise des formations, dans le cadre du Conseil ou à la demande des Etats membres. Il anime aussi des réseaux informels d'experts, par exemple pour préparer les exercices ou pour assurer la liaison avec les correspondants en charge de la gestion de la plate-forme dans les Etats membres et les institutions européennes. Il gère aussi les pages de veille et d'alerte (monitoring en bon français) de la plate-forme
- lorsque le dispositif est activé, donc qu'il y a une crise, le SGC joue son rôle de soutien politique et de conseil dans la mise en œuvre des procédures auprès de la Présidence. Toutes les directions générales concernées participent à cette action de soutien. Ainsi, nos collègues en charge du transport, de la santé, de l'agriculture, de la communication... et bien sûr les directions administratives et techniques et les juristes.
- Je vous ai beaucoup parlé de la plate-forme web. Une fois de plus, le SGC génère une page de crise adéquate sur la plate-forme web, où seront réunies les contributions des parties prenantes et les rapports ISAA. Le SGC contribue aussi, en prenant en charge la diffusion des infos sur la coordination politique au niveau de l'Union, comme par exemple les comptes rendus des réunions du Conseil, les conclusions et décisions du Conseil.

Vous conviendrez avec moi que l'IPCR, comme tout dispositif de ce genre, ne saurait s'affranchir de la communication de crise. Elle obéit néanmoins à des principes différents de ceux établis dans les Etats membres, puisque la responsabilité est d'une autre nature.

Comme tout le dispositif, la communication dans le cadre des IPCR est dirigée par la Présidence. Cela signifie donc qu'elle en prend le leadership politique et stratégique et assume la responsabilité de ses effets. Cela signifie aussi qu'elle est fondée sur un point de vue commun et des compromis pour arriver à ce résultat commun, d'autant que si l'IPCR est activé, la stratégie de communication de crise des Etats affectés aura déjà commencé à être mise en œuvre et qu'il faudra que celle adoptée dans le cadre IPCR s'y adapte.

Des messages-clé communs devront être diffusés, qui devront pouvoir s'intégrer à ce qui existe déjà dans les Etats membres et en particulier les Etats membres affectés, mais aussi être diffusé en soutien par les autres Etats membres – s'ils souhaitent s'impliquer – ou par les institutions européennes

Ces messages seront préparés avec les autres propositions d'action par la table ronde informelle, à laquelle participeront bien sûr les différentes autorités en charge de la communication de crise des Etats membres affectés, aux côtés de leurs collègues des institutions.

55

Quels outils spécifiques à la communication dans le cadre IPCR?

- Pour la préparation, nous avons organisé dans le cadre de la *preparedness policy*, un réseau informel de communicants, qui s'est réuni le 25 mars 2015 pour la première fois.
- Une fois encore, la plateforme web, dans lequel les communicants disposent d'une boîte à outils en temps de paix. En temps de crise, ils contribuent aux autres éléments de situation et disposent d'un forum spécifique pour diffuser des éléments sur l'impact de la réponse politique de l'UE ou sur les effets de la gestion de crise à leur niveau national.

Tout cela ne suffit pas. A ce stade il faut aller plus loin en...

... réaffirmant le fait, pas toujours acquis, que la communication est une partie intégrale de la préparation à la crise dans le cadre de l'IPCR.

- Cela passe par une forte sensibilisation:
  - de tous les gestionnaires de crise au niveau national
  - des décideurs en charge de la communication
- Cette préparation passe par une meilleure compréhension des actions des Etats membres et des institutions, que les acteurs apprennent à mieux se connaître hors crise, pour savoir quoi attendre.
- Cela passe surtout par une très nette amélioration du réseau existant.

Cette amélioration du réseau est une demande formulée par les communicants de crise présents à la réunion du 25 mars. Pour dire l'intérêt des Etats membres et des institutions, sur une vingtaine de présents, seuls quatre experts pouvaient se qualifier de communicants de crise, j'entends par là des gestionnaires de crise en charge du dossier communication, parfaitement entraînés à faire face à des crises majeures et complexes et susceptibles d'établir ou de participer à des travaux multisectoriels ou plutôt, pour reprendre un terme propre à la France, interministériels.

Les experts ont demandé que plus de collègues participent au réseau pour se préparer en avance dans le cadre des IPCR et surtout que ces experts soient en mesure de partager leur savoir-faire, en vue de créer ou mettre à jour des outils propres à l'IPCR, dédiés à la communication.

Je vais être clair, nous avons besoin de votre soutien et de la liaison avec vos autorités en charge de la gestion des crises, pour répondre à la demande de nos collègues et pour améliorer ce réseau.

Comment ? Très simplement :

- En fournissant des experts pour le réseau. Nous savons que cela vous coûtera cher en déplacements, mais nous pouvons aussi associer ces réunions à celles de nos groupes de travail, ce qui permettra le remboursement des frais de déplacement, qui peuvent je le sais être très lourds.
- Mais surtout, en participant activement au processus. Je sais par expérience dans différents cadres de travail internationaux ou nationaux que la communication est le parent pauvre de la gestion des crises, que ses responsables ne sont pas nécessairement associés aux prises de décision et qui faut parfois s'adapter ex-post à la décision, quitte à devoir faire des efforts très compliqués.
- Participer davantage au processus permettra en outre à vos communicants de crise de mieux connaître leurs homologues des Etats membres et des institutions. Partager des bonnes pratiques. Partager les analyses. Et tout ce qui peut être utile à la réussite d'une gestion politique commune des crises.



Expert national détaché, **François Théron** a été mis à disposition du Secrétariat général du Conseil de l'Union européenne (SGC) par la France en 2012. Membre des services du Premier ministre, il a exercé ses fonctions au secrétariat général de la défense nationale et au service d'information du Gouvernement. Il a également servi au ministère français de la Défense, à l'OSCE et aux Nations Unies.

Il est actuellement affecté à l'unité Protection civile de la direction générale Affaires étrangères, Elargissement et Protection civile du SGC, où il travaille sur la conduite politique des crises majeures, dans le cadre du dispositif de l'UE de réponse politique aux crises (IPCR).

François Théron est licencié en droit et diplômé de l'Institut d'études politiques de Paris (Sciences Po) - section Service public. Il a également occasionnellement donné des cours en France à l'Ecole nationale d'administration, à l'Ecole des officiers de la gendarmerie nationale, à l'Institut national des hautes études de la sécurité et de la justice et à l'Institut régional d'administration de Lille.

**François Théron** has been assigned by France to the General Secretariat of the Council (GSC) as Seconded National Expert in 2012. Member of the French Prime Minister office, he has served in the General Secretariat for National Defence and in the Government Information Service. He also previously served in the French Ministry of Defence, in the OSCE and in the United Nations.

He is currently assigned to the Civil Protection Unit of the Directorate-General Foreign Affairs, Enlargement and Civil Protection of the GSC, where he works on political management of major crises, in the framework of the EU Integrated Political Crisis Response (IPCR).

François Théron holds a LL.B and has graduated from Sciences Po (Public Service section). He also occasionally lectures in France for the Ecole nationale d'administration, the Ecole des officiers de la gendarmerie nationale, the Institut national des hautes études de la sécurité et de la justice and the Institut régional d'administration de Lille.

# Twenty years of Austrian Membership in the EU-Lessons for Communicating Europe

By Hans Brunmayr

This year Austria celebrates 20 years of membership in the EU. It is an occasion to look back and to examine how the opinion of Austrians about the European Union has evolved. It is also an occasion to draw more general lessons for Communicating Europe to be learnt from the Austrian case.

In June 1994 in the referendum on Austria's accession to the EU, two thirds of the population voted "Yes". Having been one of those who had prepared Austria's accession and who had toured the country informing and communicating about the EU, I felt deeply satisfied: Austria would at last be able to occupy its place among European Member States corresponding to its history and culture.

The pre-accession communication had clearly been a success which was due to several factors:

- a multitude of preparatory targeted information activities during the whole pre-accession period
- an efficient pre-referendum information campaign with TV-spots and billboards and simple messages culminating in the affirmation "We are Europe"
- political engagement of Government, main political parties and social partners

However the enthusiasm and the "We are Europe"-feeling did not last long. The political discussion was quickly back to internal quarrels; the EU was no longer a priority topic and communication about Europe did no longer appear primordial.

The first years of Austria in the EU were dominated by the question whether the EU did really provide the monetary advantages and gains which had been promised during the pre-accession campaign.

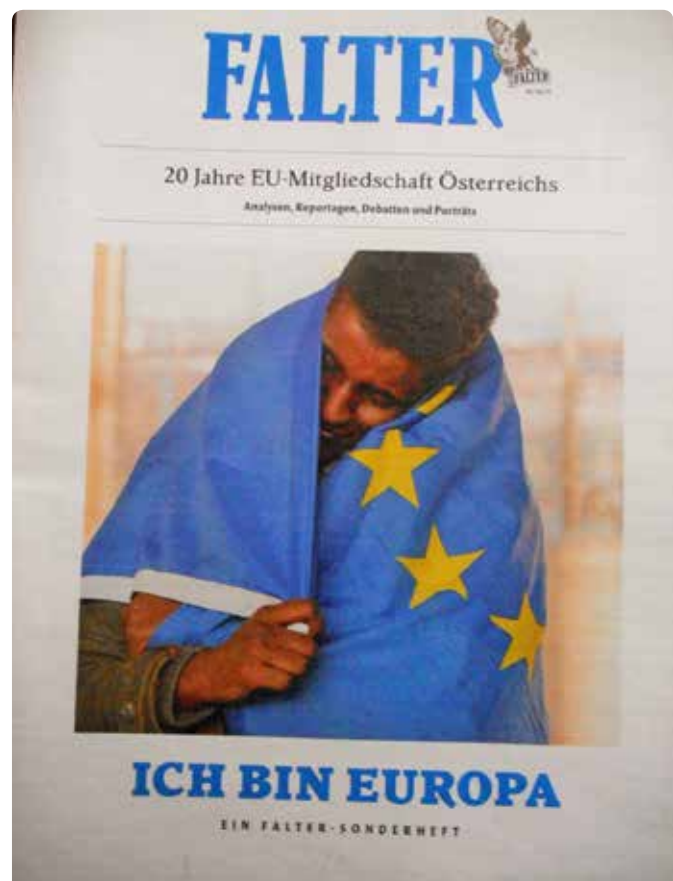
Things improved with the first Austrian Council Presidency in 1998. One got the impression that Austria's train had finally arrived at destination Brussels. Alas, in 2000 when Wolfgang Schüssel formed a Government with the right-wing Freedom Party of Jörg Haider, the 14 other EU-Member States imposed diplomatic sanctions on Austria. The measures were withdrawn a few months later, but the damage was done and as a result the Austrian train started moving again, but this time away from Brussels. A majority of Austrians felt offended by the EU and returned to the "small is beautiful" - mentality that had dominated for many years, considering their own country as an island where things were better than anywhere else. The EU continued to be seen as a foreign entity imposing negative measures invented by an anonymous and faceless bureaucracy ignoring the real concerns of the Austrian population.

Government and political leaders did not fight efficiently against this negative mood. The common work in the EU-institutions, the reasoning behind new rules adopted at European level as well as the participation and role of Austria in this decision shaping and making process were not explained and not communicated timely. On the contrary, like many of their colleagues from other Member States, Austrian politicians often preferred to use a different language at home and to put the blame for decisions unpopular in Austria on the EU.

The "Brussels bashing" was and continues to be reinforced by the national media and particularly the tabloid press which are in majority Eurosceptic and exercise a considerable influence on public opinion.

The ongoing intense and heated debate in Austria about the TTIP is a perfect example for official double language and misinformation from interest groups and media: Some NGOs and pressure groups representing a small minority of the population using social media and populist press won the support of

57







# 50 Brains. 120 Minutes. 1 Challenge.

## Workshop on Communicating TTIP

**Over 50 European communication experts dedicated 120 minutes at the Vienna meeting to finding creative ideas and solutions for successfully communicating the transatlantic trade and investment partnership agreement (TTIP). Using the design thinking method, factors to success were discussed, ideas gathered and concepts developed in an interactive workshop.**

June 12, 2015 – The second day of the Club of Venice conference in Vienna centered on interaction. For the first time, communication experts worked in focus-groups on how to communicate the transatlantic free-trade agreement TTIP. For two years, the EU commission has been negotiating in Brussels this agreement with their American counterparts. While talks with the USA are going according to plan, the European public is divided over the significance and necessity of the agreement. The EU-average sees 58% in favor of, 25% opposed to and 17% neutral towards TTIP. A closer look reveals huge differences between the member states: The strongest opposition to TTIP can be found in Austria (53%), Luxemburg (43%) and Germany (41%). On the other side of the spectrum, Lithuania (79%), Malta and Romania (75%) and the Netherlands (74%) show the strongest support for the agreement, according to studies conducted by the European Commission<sup>1</sup>. These differences amongst the member states pose communicative challenges. Additionally, the topic of TTIP has been used as a projection screen for other critical issues such as globalization and neo-liberalism. In no time, TTIP has triggered an immense media coverage – especially in social media. The debate is focusing on the way TTIP is communicated, and less on the content of TTIP. Lutz Güllner, European Commission's Directorate General for Trade and Head of Unit Communication, Information and Civil Society, addressed these special features of the debate about TTIP at Club of Venice.

Lutz Güllner opened with a keynote on the second conference day and presented the current status of negotiations and the challenges for TTIP. Then the interactive workshop, which was based on the principle of design thinking, started. Design thinking is a method for innovation and has been developed to suit the work-flow of designers and architects. People from diverse professions work together in a creative environment and develop concepts collaboratively, considering human needs and motivation.

The aim of the workshop was to define factors for success in the communication of TTIP, gather ideas and preliminary solutions. In 120 minutes, the participants worked intensively in 6 focus groups. Fast thinking, simple solutions for a complex topic and creative ideas to convince an audience were asked of the contributors. They had to work under the time pressure – many

different tasks had to be accomplished in between 2 and 10 minutes, alone or in groups.

At first, the groups defined and discussed potential success-factors for communicating TTIP. Then the communication experts developed ideas for implementation. Their favorite ones were singled out and a concept was developed in detail. Finally, each group had to present their idea. The results were indeed creative: Ranging from a TV-show about TTIP similar to Borgen or House of Cards, to international TTIP game shows or to full-fledged campaigns. Overall, the event has successfully fostered debate and motivated participants to come up with inspiring ideas to meet the communicative challenge of TTIP.

### What is "Design Thinking"?

Design thinking is a human-centered, creative process that helps to come up with meaningful solutions. The method is characterized by an architectural approach to problems, making use of models and visualization. It aims at finding practical, but also creative resolutions by using a goal as starting point, rather than a problem. The main objective is innovation by combining many inventive, but also analytical methods. The various stages of the process include defining complications, brainstorming and idea generation, conceptualization of these ideas and finally presenting them. Design thinking is continually evolving and there is no fixed set of steps to be followed. Work takes place in teams, which should be assembled of people from different professions and backgrounds. The overall idea is to spend less time planning, and more time doing.

<sup>1</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb82/eb82\\_anx\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb82/eb82_anx_en.pdf)

# 120 Minutes – Be open to the process

## 7 challenges of communicating TTIP

- Debate is focused on the discussion/communication itself, less on the content and concrete issues
- Major differences among the EU member states
- TTIP serves as a projection screen for other topics (e.g. globalization)
- From 0 to 100 – large media coverage
- Numerous communicators and new (social) media, no central sender
- Lack of credibility of the elites and transparency
- Limited resources

60



Communicating TTIP



Lutz Güllner, European Commission, informs about the current status of TTIP.



**Sandra Luger** is Managing Director at Gaisberg Consulting and has supported numerous companies – across all industries – in their strategic repositioning and during challenging phases, such as restructuring, opening new markets, and corporate branding. With expertise garnered from more than 15 years of experience in change management, crisis management and corporate communications, Ms Luger also served as a member of the Management Board of Grayling Austria until 2011. Sandra Luger holds a Magister (Master's degree) in journalism, and also completed degree studies in interpretation at the University of Vienna.





**Leading the workshop: Sandra Luger and Judith Erfelder, Gaisberg**



**Defining factors for success**  
Finding factors for successful communication of TTIP in small groups



**Collecting ideas**  
Gathering ideas on possible ways to successfully communicate TTIP



**Developing a concept**  
How could the idea be realized successfully?

61



**Preparing the presentation**  
Creating posters and presenting them

Photos: (C) BKA/Stefanik



**Judith Erfelder** offers expertise in the field of change, advising companies that are on the verge of instituting major changes – like strategy changes, product roll-outs or new structures and processes. During the three years prior to joining Gaisberg Consulting, she was working as consultant in change management and internal communications at the BMW Group in Munich, where she held responsibility for the initiation, design, implementation and evaluation of change processes, as well as strategic communications projects. Ms Erfelder graduated from the University of Salzburg with a Master's degree in communications and also attained a Master's degree in crisis and restructuring management from the FH Kufstein University of Applied Sciences.



# “Adventures in Government”: Ethics in Communication

*Contribution to the NAGC communication school in Memphis, organised on 2-4 June 2015 by the US National Association of Government Communicators*

*By Vincenzo Le Voci*

The first time I met John Verrico, President of NAGC, was in 2012 in Budva, where the Montenegrin Government authorities invited me to attend the first meeting of the South East Europe Association of Public Communicators (SEECOM). John's huge experience in government communication was instrumental in contributing to the adoption of the Budva Declaration (published in previous editions of *Convergences*), a decisive step forward to give shape to governmental strategies and share of best practices in a geographical zone of the continent where there is a wide variety of political and communication challenges.

SEECOM include communication professionals from countries of the former Yugoslavia, some of which already EU Member States, others associated with the Union and others in the process of acquiring a candidate status. Two of those countries are not yet unanimously recognized by the international community and one of them has bilateral outstanding political issues with EU Member States. SEECOM was able to make a breach and facilitate dialogue among all the participants, beyond any obstacle. And continues to work in the right direction, since it operates to promote cooperation, inclusiveness, proximity to citizens, openness and transparency. There may not be democracy, mutual respect, and development without sharing those goals and good values.

In the United States, NAGC operates under the same principles of SEECOM and the VENICE CLUB. It has chosen to promote strategic communication in all its features: creativity, delivery, public engagement, awareness raising, innovation, branding, partnership and share of a true communication culture and commitment.

On the occasion of its annual communication school held in Memphis on 2-4 June, John invited me, in my capacity of Secretary-General of the Club of Venice to open one of its daily sessions, to address the Members of the Association (specialists from all US Departments and from Canadian public administrations) on “The Role of Ethics in Government Communication”, bringing the view of European public communicators on how to build or re-gain citizens' trust and work as ideal facilitators between them and their political masters.

The Club has a consolidated tradition in this matter, since one of its key principles is to work together to set the standards for ethical communication and enable the key players in the communication process to act honestly, trustworthily and at the service of the community. Stefano Rolando has been carrying out a long battle for the creation of an internationally recognised professional statute of governmental/institutional communicator.

As I mentioned in my key-note in Memphis, and also in a guest post on the NAGC blog (<http://governmentcommunicators.blogspot.com/2015/03/we-cannot-overlook-ethics.html>), we know it is difficult enough to build winning communication strategies with content and tools that get through to broadly varied audiences and perceptions. But if we lack or overlook ethics, we should consider a career change NOW!

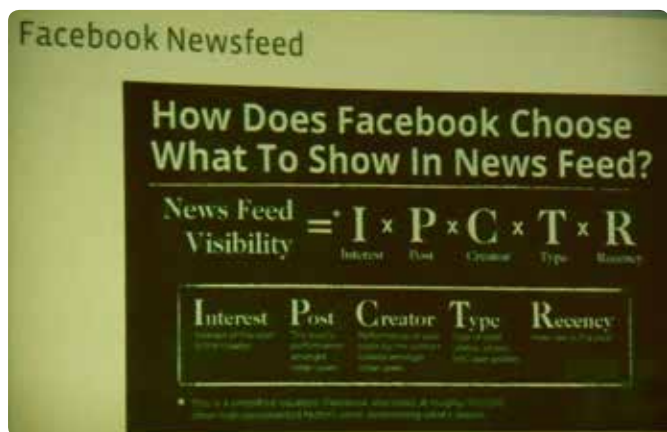


Governmental and institutional communication has traditionally been tough work. In Europe, we may sometimes call public sector communication “mission impossible” (in this regard, see also our editorial introduction to the EuroPCom 2015 programme in this number of *Convergences*). What are we experiencing nowadays? Multi-culturally diverse audiences in each country and locality, cross-border communication considerations, economic stagnation, security concerns and perceptions of threats to sovereignty, which all contribute to challenges, misunderstandings, tensions and uncertainties in a European Union constantly in search of its identity and under public scrutiny.

How to take into account the variety of audiences in each country? How to build cross-border communication synergies in times of economic stagnation, high unemployment rates, and threats to security? How to better inform citizens about policies having an impact on their habits without running the risk of misperceptions (solidarity vs. loss of sovereignty)?

In all societies, the communicators' abilities and willingness to root their advice and statements in honesty – and firmly grounded in the complexities of the real world – can make the difference.

But ethics are born inside. Before being a “gift outright” (as Robert Frost entitled one of its most famous poems), they are a “gift innate.” If ethics are driving our steps, all the rest comes naturally. Ethics drive our ability to develop mutual respect and trusted relationships, allow for the willing exchange of best practices and winning models among peers, and for having courage and determination in the pursuit of common ground.



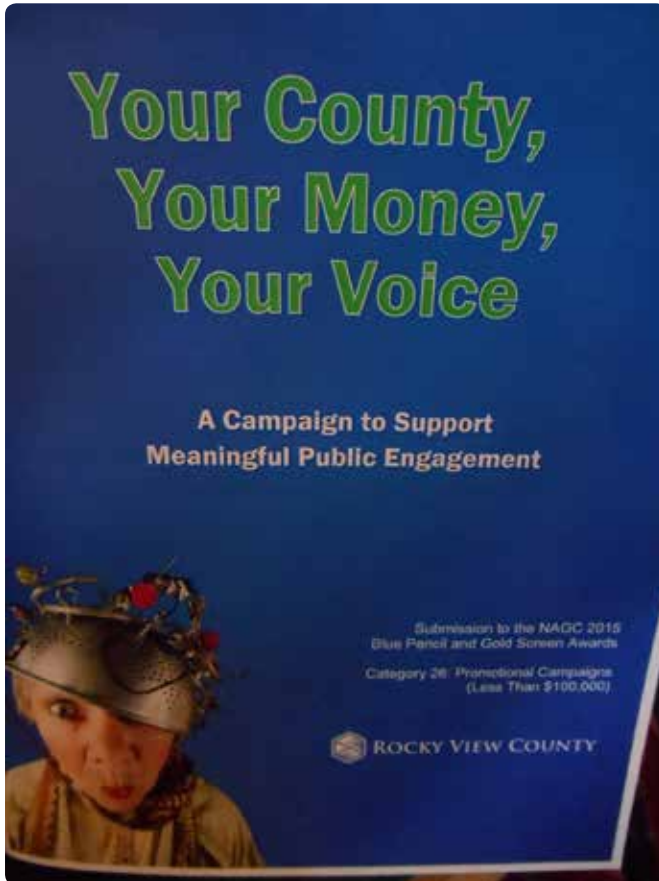
This is the only way to break through barriers (differing languages, cultures, socio-economic factors, and historical prejudices and mistrust). Without communication ethics, and without consciousness of our role as honest brokers towards citizens and politicians, we can expect the smallest incidents to compound into major crises, increasingly affecting all sectors of society. Without communication ethics, anything and everything could take a turn for the worst. Hence, we must always be ready to defend ethic values against those who may ignore them or are guided by “other interests”.

Challenges and responsibilities? The EU's founding fathers were well aware of the very difficult task ahead of them. In my keynote I also referred to their heritage and their ethical values, projecting the 8' video “Europe through the generations” recently produced by the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU and released on the occasion of the EU Open Day on 9 May 2015. The clip ends with Robert Schuman's full consciousness of the EU's project as “a step towards the unknown” -- a world to be built together, whatever the cost, for the common good.

Here below, a short summary of the training and conference modules of the NAGC communication school. The variety and richness of the programme have many similarities with the Club of Venice agenda.

- KEY NOTE: Creativity in Government Communication
- Speaking to the Media with Style and Grace
- Mentoring up: a Guide to training your boss about communications without alienating him or her
- Engineer your Speeches: A step-by-step approach to hassle-free professional speechwriting
- KEY NOTE: Enron: the Collapse of a Culture of Innovation
- Reputation Management in a Social World
- Easy Sell: the D.C. Office of Contracting and Procurement's Vendor Outreach programs
- Ten Practical Tips for Repurposing content for many channels and many audiences
- Brand Storytelling – Blending Storytelling and Branding to Reframe your agency
- Transform Plain Documents into Stylish Presentations
- KEY NOTE: Explaining Ebola: Focused Communication on a Highly Charged Issue
- KEY NOTE: The Role of Ethics in Government Communication
- Case study: Raising Awareness with an Influential Stakeholder Group
- Delivering delight: A new approach to Citizen Engagement
- Media Panel: Public records and social media
- KEY NOTE: Beyond the “Like” – Strategies for success on Facebook
- Not Good enough for government work: The anatomy of a silver anvil-winning campaign
- Was it something I said? (on the impact of “memorable” quotes from public officials around the world)
- Redefining public engagement in Planning Through the Mid-South Greenprint
- The Role of Civility and Etiquette in Government Communications
- Going Social: Using Social Media to Effectively Engage your community
- Motivational Leadership in the PAO shop
- KEY NOTE: Big Communication Moments: defining Ferguson
- NAGC Communication Awards session





There were also four-hour training workshops on:

- Integrated, Coordinated and Synchronized Communications Through Strategic Communication Planning Graphic Design Techniques Transform a Blank Canvas Into Artwork
- Feed the Content Monster: How to Write for Multiple Audiences in Multiple Channels

EXHIBITORS and SPONSORS: PostModern Company, GovDelivery, WinStorm, Zayas Hendrick Mediaworks, American Military University, FED Insider.

NAGC is willing to become an international association of government communicators and is open to new members from overseas. At present, representatives from a number of non-American countries have already acquired the membership status. For those interested in becoming members, the relevant link to the Association website is <http://www.nagc.com> or [www.nagconline.org](http://www.nagconline.org).

The Club of Venice review Convergences has already hosted contributions from NAGC and our members have published some articles in NAGC's blog. We are only at the beginning of a great period of cooperation ahead of us. The Club will do its best to honour the next annual NAGC appointment foreseen in Washington D.C. from 7 to 9 June 2016.

### Vincenzo Le Voci

Secretary-General of the Club of Venice; Administrator Press/Communications, Council of the EU

Studied at University of Cagliari (Master degree in foreign languages and literature) and attended modern history, European Integration and management courses in Belgium and at US Universities. 1985-1991 Housing Manager at the US Air Force. Since 1992 EU Council official. He has worked on Transparency and Information Policy issues since 2001 and contributed articles for communications books and magazines. Since 2011 Secretary General of the Club of Venice, the network of the communications directors from the European Union member states and institutions and from countries candidate to the EU membership. Currently he works for the "Public Relations" Unit of the Council of the EU, coordinating the communication agenda of the Council Working Party on Information. He consolidated his experience within the Council by working in the Linguistic Division, Research and Technological Development, Education and Culture and Staff Training Departments.



# Enterprise for All through partnership

By Nick Jones

*Introduction by Vincenzo Le Voci*

*Before landing in the VISA universe, Nick Jones worked as a senior specialist leading the web communication services of the former UK Central Office for Information. He knows what means facing with challenges from scratch – what is the essence of partnership – and how crucial is to work in an organization with multi-faceted objectives and tasks. And today these elements are crucial in a world where scaling up technology is a must.*

*In this contribution, Nick doesn't speak a theoretical language, but goes strictly to the point: preparing the ground for young generations of entrepreneurs requires a clear vision and readiness in investing on training as well as on digital innovation, establishing to this end close connections with policy makers, business and a wide variety of private sectors, teachers and families.*

*Innovation, growth and employment are an inseparable whole. The Club has covered these topics on different occasions and in different formats. It is sufficient to recall the seminar "Public communication: re-gaining citizens' confidence in times of crisis" held in Athens in March 2014, when distinguished speakers presented some interesting case studies such as the free logistic and legal support provided by the Dutch Embassy in Athens to young entrepreneurs and the training opportunity (sometime followed by concrete work perspectives) offered by Corallia (see Convergences n° 5). And another example of the Club's engagement in this field was its plenary meeting held in Rome in November 2014, when we heard very interesting contributions from the European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry and DG Regio on concrete EU's programmes (see Convergences n° 7) involving in particular the young generation.*

*Communication must be linked to tangible horizons and we are pleased to host Nick's contribution on what VISA Europe is doing to facilitate and support young entrepreneurship).*

65

Being entrepreneurial is not for an elite. Digital technology and the right attitude allow all of us to create value. A key contributor to all our wellbeing - social and economic. This is not the pie in the sky vision of a digital evangelist but the reality witnessed by Visa employees taking part in start up challenges. We are proud to back such entrepreneur education activity.

To make this happen partnerships are critical. These partnerships range from the schools local to our offices to the very heart of political Brussels. It is great to see so many supporters and organisations pull together in partnerships. It all helps

widen access to entrepreneur education.

So who do we partner with? Some organisations will be names recognised by students, business and policy makers. Others are only really known in a particular place or to a certain group of experts. But all allow Visa to deliver on our vision to 'equip young people to thrive in the digital economy.

Working out from the classroom coalface let's look at the types of partners need to make it all happen.



## The NGOs

Visa Europe operates in 37 countries. From Iceland to Israel, Portugal to Turkey, it is difficult to find a single partner who can deliver classroom-based financial education through entrepreneurial activities. Therefore we are grateful to work with Junior Achievement. It works in 39 countries!

JA works with teachers, volunteers and students to deliver financial education programmes based around entrepreneurial opportunities. The fun of having an idea and the challenge of making it happen offer so many chances to teach.

Sometimes, the particular circumstance of our company or Junior Achievement and a special need in a country means we also partner with others. This is true when seeking to help parents be part of the financial education process. In the UK we work with Parent Zone. It provides content for parents via schools' own web sites. We've pioneered digital financial skills content with them.

## Private Sector Partners

In Turkey, we've also partnered with most of the country's banks. All to bring together a coordinated financial education programme. Parami Yonetebiliyorum means I Can Manage My Money. The funding the partner banks released for this programme means that it has reached hundreds of thousands of Turkish students.

Sponsorships also allow educational moments beyond the classroom. In Romania, we work with Junior Achievement to create online games that teach financial basics and how to shop safely online.

In the UK we have growing relationships with a new type of private sector partners such as start-up hubs and accelerators. This is through our Visa Collab innovation hubs. Visa has experience in scaling up technology to tackle big problems like fraud and security. We can help start-ups with these challenges. We hope to see alumni from our work in schools and universities appear in our hub one day!

## Education professionals and policy makers.

A key partners in programmes like Parami and Junior Achievements are, of course, the educators and policy makers. It is critical to be welcomed into classrooms and to help with skills that are part of the curriculum.

Again, the reputation of our NGO partner Junior Achievement is critical. It has the trust of the teacher, earned through the hard work of its volunteers. And, it works hard with ministries of education to ensure that its programmes deliver for the curriculum too.



Aarhus Business Academy students develop their start-up idea at a Visa-backed Challenge Day run by Denmark's Junior Achievement chapter

We also partner with policy makers at the highest level. We're founder members of the EE-Hub EU. This group of experts in entrepreneur education has been brought together by the European Commission. It not only aims to better inform their policy makers, it acts as a broker of good ideas, best practice and evidence. School curriculums are crowded. Teachers are busier than ever. CSR budgets are squeezed. Volunteers are time poor. Students have lots of other things to do with their time. So, we need the evidence and tips on how we improve their financial

capability. That evidence points to entrepreneur education as being a brilliant way to do so.

Every Entrepreneur knows that the right partnerships can unlock value for their business. We want to mimic that. We want our partnerships to unlock entrepreneur education opportunities for all not just an elite.



Visa employees mentor DEtour, a student start-up from Kingston University, London



**Nick Jones** leads Visa Europe's digital corporate communications and corporate responsibility work. His digital team manages presences on the web and social media that protect and improve its reputation across its 37 European markets. His CR team helps young people thrive in the digital economy, in particular through financial education. He joined Visa in March 2013 after a decade in public service. He was the head of digital at 10 Downing Street where he was responsible for the Prime Minister's digital communication and engagement across 12 digital channels. And, Larry the Cat's too. He is a former Jupiter Research analyst who covered consumer online behaviour in the last century. He first wrote about the Internet in 1994 when he co-founded New Media Age magazine.

# Mobile application “Football” developed by the State Chancellery of the Republic of Latvia – among TOP 40 in the World

By Signe Znotina-Znota

Nearly a year ago, when the Club of Venice took place in Rīga (June 2014), Latvia, we introduced you to some case studies that we have implemented here to develop and ensure that our government and public administration become open, modern and sustainable.

Do you remember the mobile application “Football” developed by the State Chancellery to improve efficiency in public administration? Well, we are pleased to inform that “Football” is named one of the world’s best apps in the “m-Government and Participation” category at the World Summit Award Mobile event held by the United Nations Organization in Abu Dhabi. The Latvian mob app is ranked among the 40 best globally by the expert jury!

## Just to remind - Why was the mobile application developed?

At the moment, the public administration is facing a number of problems, e.g., ‘one-stop agency’ principle doesn’t work in real life yet; the client-oriented culture is not developed; employees are playing “bad football” with people: they are “passing” people to other institutions or experts even if all information can be provided at the same place. This cultivates inappropriate bureaucracy and administrative burden. To change it, the State Chancellery launched the initiative “Let’s Share the Burden”. Society appreciated it a lot, and hundreds of useful and constructive suggestions were received. To strengthen this initiative, the campaign “Pass to Get a Better Result!” was launched and new modern, digital tools were developed to make participation easier – a mobile application “Football” and a separate, user-friendly website to explain the whole idea behind “Let’s Share the Burden!”. The mob app is being used as a part of effort to streamline public administration, “passing” quick feedback from the public and between departments - hence the name “Football”. People can use mob app to “pass” - to evaluate the service and give immediate feedback about the quality of process, cooperation, and experience in general. The State Chancellery receives every feedback, considers it and regularly reports to the highest level – the Prime Minister, ministers and state secretaries in the context of the progress in developing an efficient and professional public administration. The mob app also functions as a database of public administration institutions (address, contact information, working hours, location on a map etc.), making it a unique digital society participation tool for the EU government.

68

## What is World Summit Award Mobile?

The World Summit Award Mobile (WSA-mobile) is a global initiative to select and promote the world’s best in mobile content and innovative applications within the framework of, and in cooperation with, the United Nations’ World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), mandated by the WSIS Plan of Action and executed in collaboration with UNESCO, UNIDO and UN GAID.



You can watch a video about the app in action at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3p0Br5LI82k>

And the video where the Prime Minister of the Republic of Latvia asks ministers and state secretaries to consider these tools and analyse user feedback:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGTZw0tuRBo>

Video about the initiative "Let's Share the Burden!":  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PQe1b00SkaE>



### **Signe Znotina-Znota**

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

Signe is responsible for everyday communication of the Cabinet of Ministers and State Chancellery, media relation management and different government event organizing. She is motivated to help developing small, efficient, transparent, and professional civil service in Latvia.

Signe is member of 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 Press Office of the Latvian National Opera House, and for six years has been working at integrated communication agency "Reputé" Consultant and 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 was the project manager of the State Chancellery's campaign "Pass To Get a Better Result!". It got 3rd place in the leading annual communication management forum in Northern Europe "Baltic PR Awards 2014" in category "Public sector campaigns". Mobile application „Football" (the main element of the campaign) is awarded as TOP 40 mobile application in the world and TOP5 mobile application in the category „Government and Participation" in „World Summit Awards Mobile" - contest organized by United Nations.

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



# The Crowd is the Future

*The successful reform of "Advocate Europe", an online idea challenge for civil society organisations*

By Verena Ringler

In the past issues of "Convergences", I outlined how the paradigm of "co-creation" has been changing our idea of communication, especially in European Affairs and the public sector. I discussed how yesterday's audiences are now taking to the stage of democratic process. Yesterday's recipients of information are now delivering information, and yesterday's clients of policy programmes are designing policies today.

What does this mean in practice? How can organisations ride on this wave of transformation that is shaping the worlds of communication and democracy? How can we harness the strengths of both paradigms, the outgoing and the incoming one?

We have tackled these questions ourselves here at Stiftung Mercator in Germany, an independent private foundation. We aim at strengthening Europe by fostering our societal and political cohesion and ability to act. Turkey is part of Europe as far as we are concerned, regardless of the specific question of EU accession. We came to the conclusion that whenever possible, we want to keep working with existing partners in the field of European affairs and the exchange of people and ideas, and we want to keep working with existing programmes if they have had an impact in the past. And yet, we have found that both – the constellation of partners, as well as the shape of a project—can be radically reformed such that a large, multi-annual endeavour pioneers into new waters while harnessing established strengths.



© Advocate Europe / Shoresh Fezoni

Let me present one example of a large project that has travelled with us at the foundation, and has successfully undergone the metamorphosis from a more traditional project in European

affairs and civil society into a spot-on contemporary and co-creative one. "Advocate Europe" is an idea challenge for original and transnational projects that foster connection and cohesion in Europe. In each call, Stiftung Mercator funds up to twelve innovative project ideas with up to €50,000 each. The challenge is open to civil society actors who seek financing and support to realise sustainable ideas. These can come from fields as diverse as civic education, arts and culture, or social innovation.

In 2012, Stiftung Mercator rolled out "Advocate Europe" for the first time, communicating it as an idea challenge for small and medium-sized project partners in European affairs and civil society. Both in 2012 and 2013, the foundation asked for entries and received around 60 each time around. Many entries back then came from institutes and non-profit organisations that could be called "usual suspects" in European affairs. When asked for hands-on ideas for fostering connection and cohesion in Europe, many thought of the French-German relationship or the Weimar Triangle (the Polish-German-French configuration); there were phrases – in 2013 – like, "we want to work with youth behind the former Iron Curtain"; hardly any connections to South Europe had been present. In those years, grant seekers wrote their applications mostly in German since the whole call was launched in German, by a German foundation. Applicants packaged their project ideas in physical envelopes so that ultimately, the full menu of possible partners and ideas was only visible to us in our office. After an in-house filtering process, a small jury composed of leading foundation staff and one high-ranking senior diplomat decided to support up to twelve projects in each round. We called the winners, and started to work with them. Let's be clear: There was nothing wrong with this process. Even in the first two rounds of "Advocate Europe", we ended up with some partners who we very much cherish to work with until today. And yet, Advocate Europe was ready for a renovation.

In late 2013, we at the foundation geared up to move "Advocate Europe" gently but thoroughly to the 21st century. We wanted this idea challenge to stand out from our Europe portfolio; we wanted it to leap to the front of innovation. We wanted Advocate Europe to act as our strategic cell, where we annually source for partners and trends that can help move Europe beyond crisis. We wished this idea challenge to function in two languages (English and German), online, and openly. Every applicant should see the full menu of ideas on the website, just like in an exhibition of "ideas for change". Every website user should be able to vote for an audience award.

**Was this easy? While it was not, we knew it was necessary. We knew that ongoing mega-trends in society and politics would sooner or later force us to leave our comfort zone and to touch base with constituencies whose values and patterns of interaction are truly transnational and often online, and who often create change far away from the world of politics.** We knew we would be confronted with unconventional types of initiatives and approaches in the field of European civil society work. Some of us feared that civil society grant seekers might not like to share their precious ideas, openly, on one website for everyone to see. Some others in our ranks cautioned that some applicants might rebel against the English-language communication process. Another pill to swallow, we suspected, could come with the audience award that would be given directly and only by the crowd.



© Advocate Europe / Shoresh Fezoni

Fast forward to the summer of 2015. Advocate-Europe.eu, the website, pops up with an English and a German-language interface. It has seen more than 35.000 registered users – a number experts tell us is huge in this field. Besides the news on Greece and Iran, our Twitter accounts and some TV stations tell us about ongoing civil society activities such as “Refugees Welcome”, “Maidan- The Aftermath”, “JobActEurope” or “Growth Initiative - Municipalities for a Strong Europe”—four of the ten 2015 Advocate Europe idea challenge winners, whose ink under the grant contracts just dried. These projects are now being realized, they receive up to 50.000,00 euros in grants just like in earlier times. What is new is that project staff also receive intense organisational coaching and mentoring on impact, plus, a continuous peer-to-peer exchange network. Also, an 11th project won a newly introduced audience award.

What has happened? Before relaunching the idea challenge, we encouraged two respected partners of our foundation to join forces in a contracting partnership. MitOst, a widely respected cultural affairs platform in Berlin joined forces with Liquid Democracy, Germany’s shooting stars in the field of e-democracy. Liquid Democracy are a non-profit organisation by political scientist students gone software developers, and they have – in the course of reforming our “Advocate Europe” idea challenge – developed their third version of adhocracy, an open source public participation and deliberation software. That is one crucial thing that happened.

**While readers might shrug and ask for the twist in this story, they might recall that in everyday practice, political and civil society organisations that were founded before the year 2000, and those that were founded afterwards, don’t usually even know of each other, not to speak about interacting with each other.** With “Advocate Europe”, complete strangers in terms of organisations have entered a multi-annual and highly intense project partnership, agreeing to the good and the less good times of partnership. Naturally, the “old world” and the “new world” paradigms clash at times. In the course of the past months, our foundation and MitOst had to learn a whole new set of vocabulary and mechanisms when working with modern-day software developers, they in turn were new to the organisational logic and mechanisms of established players (including the odd printout for a board meeting). Most of the time, however, the “marriage” of these two paradigms has led us to see and to celebrate the whole that is now so much bigger than the sum of the parts. Already after Advocate Europe’s first year in the new constellation, we believe that encouraging partnerships not only between countries but also between the worlds of organisational generations is a great secret of success for the European political and civil society sector.

What else is different now from before? In April 2015, we had closed the first open online challenge of a European foundation in this field of civil society work with nearly 600 entries from 39 countries—ten times more entries than in previous calls, and from six times more countries than in previous calls. This means not only that we learned of the existence and rationale of nearly 600 civil society initiatives for change from North to South, and East to West. It also means **we read through 600 loud and clear articulations of a European dream, and we understood that the time has come for ordinary citizens to get up and become active. People’s will and readiness for change is huge; what we as a foundation or as political organisations can do now is help pave the way.**

We also changed the whole process of selecting our winners. Instead of an in-house jury, we invited seven senior figures to form a selection jury. In May 2015, for 1,5 days, these experienced players from the fields of design thinking, social innovation, diplomacy, e-democracy, and bottom-up citizen movements convened in Berlin. Together, they filtered and traded, they discarded and seconded dozens of project proposals.



© Advocate Europe / Shoresh Fezoni

Ultimately, ten projects plus one audience award winner have been selected. How do we want to live in future? What is the 'culture of welcome' we should extend to refugees arriving in Europe? What is the future of social services and welfare systems in Europe? These are some of the questions that the winning project ideas of the Advocate Europe idea challenge are

trying to answer as they are rolled out these weeks. **Refugees for Co-creative Cities** responds to the need for a new 'culture of welcome' for refugees in Europe through an exciting mixture of local intervention and cross-European exchange. **Refugees Welcome** addresses the difficult living conditions facing refugees in collective housing arrangements. **Kitchen on the Run** creates a space where refugees and local residents can meet one another, relax and exchange experiences. **POC21** wants to deliver the proof of concept that a different and more sustainable way of life is possible. **Funding the Cooperative City** explores visions for the city of tomorrow, where social services are provided by citizen networks and where cooperative urban development prevails. **Growth Initiative - Municipalities for a Strong Europe** sees potential for cooperation between European cities which are experiencing similar structural problems. **JobActEurope** enables and empowers individuals to face the complex demands of youth unemployment. **Thumbs of Europe** offers an easy and visually appealing online platform, which acts as an entry point for understanding complicated EU policymaking processes. **FutureDocs** aims to ensure that human rights stories are told in today's Europe. The film project **Maidan the Aftermath** enables young people to share authentic stories from the Maidan.

To summarize, so far, we at Stiftung Mercator believe we have done the right thing by gently pushing our "Advocate Europe" competition out of our own comfort zone and by planting it where an idea challenge is ideally placed—out there, with the crowd, with the citizens.

See more at [advocate-europe.eu](http://advocate-europe.eu)



**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](http://europeancommons.eu)

# Communicating without Dialogue

By Daniele Esposito

In June 2014, Jean-Claude Juncker was elected as President of the European Commission. His election represents the first example of a so-called "Spitzenkandidaten System". In this system, the candidates are put forward by the political groups and, after the election, the winner receives the approval of the Council. The direct endorsement from the majority of the Parliament provides the President of the Commission with a stronger political legitimacy. In fact, the Parliament with its majority vote, approves, since the beginning, the political objective of the chosen candidate: namely, the 10 Priorities of Juncker's Commission. As a result of this process, the Commission may feel more autonomous to tackle issues directly, without engaging in long discussion with the Parliament, since there was a previous agreement on the general political vision. Nowadays, the EU is experiencing readjustment of the relations among the institutions, triggered by a much more political weight of both the Parliament and the Commission.

This article intends to explore the effects of this new political equilibrium on the communication practices of the EU institutions.

Ten priorities and a single voice. These are the principle of the new European Commission's communication strategy. Coherently with these principles, the DG Communication has become a presidential service under the direct supervision of the Presidency and its cabinet. The Spokespersons service (SPP) as well underwent a radical restructuring: the commissioners do not have anymore a dedicated spokesperson but only a communication advisor and the SPP has a more centralised role, being in charge exclusively for the communication of the ten priorities.

This new structure allows the Commission to streamline its communication around the 10 Juncker's priorities.

The internal restructuring of the Commission's communication is just one side of the new Commission approach concerning communication. Comparing its usual behaviour when dealing with the other institutions, the Commission seems to be willing to limit the inter-institutional interactions. However, already during the Reading's mandate the inter-institutional cooperation experienced a stagnation. In fact, the main instruments of inter-institutional cooperation for communications had already been abandoned before the Juncker's Commission. The Inter-institutional Group of Information (IGI) had its last meeting in October 2013. It was the ideal policy structure for agreeing on orientations concerning EU communication strategies and selecting common communication priorities for the EU institutions and Member States. Similarly, the "Communicating Europe in Partnership Framework", despite its good results proven by both national and horizontal evaluation, was not anymore included in the new draft annual budget of the EU, allegedly as

a Commission's historical reaction to for the reduction in the budget of the MFF 2014-2020 .

Today, the approach of the Commission has not changed. As a consequence, other institutions' communicators have an hard time in finding an interlocutor in the Commission in order to be updated about the mid and long term institution's plan. The lack of the previous platforms of inter-institutional cooperation does not allow to define, which is the general direction of the EU communication. The absence of indications and of the good will to communicate from the Commission is putting the other communicators in a sort of stall, waiting for a chance for defining common streamline.

This initial confusion is the results of the new political role the Commission is willing to play. The other institutions should recognise and react to this new approach, without expecting anymore a shared communication long term outlook. As a matter of fact, the Commission's 10 Priorities have been already approved by the Parliament. Moreover, these Priorities are the results of an expansion of the 5 priorities set by the European Council on the 27th of June. Therefore, *de facto*, there is already a shared agreement about the general streamline of the EU. This is the reason for the Commission's low inclination to set inter-institutional priorities in line with the joint-declaration of 22 October 2008: there is already a set of legitimised priorities to be followed.

73



This new tendency in the inter-institutional communication is very well pictured by the recent interest in corporate communication. Till recently there have been a trade off for the communication DGs between branding the Union as the overall result of the co-decision process or to promote the institutional identity and role. Nowadays, it does not seem to be an issue anymore. This corporate branding process already started, during Viviane



Reading's mandate and today it is a common practice. The current approach of the EU communication for citizens intends to mark the differences among the institutions. The EU citizens are supposed to better understand the structure and the functions of the EU institutions, witnessing the divergences and the contrasts among them. Therefore, according to this Commission's vision, a least coordinated communication and a strong corporate branding for each institution should become the rule.

However, this new political equilibrium and its influence on the communication policy of the EU institutions should not justify a decrease in propensity of engaging in an inter-institutional communication strategy and neither should determine the freezing of the relationship between Commissions and Member States. As a matter of fact, each institution has its own role and features. As a consequence, the approach and the view concerning different issues may be divergent or even opposite. However, it does not imply the absence of a shared communication strategy regarding general topics. A feasible solution can be represented by a reestablishment of platforms of discussion like the IGI and, at the same time, informal meetings among staff member, dealing with operational level issues. In this context, it may be possible to agree on general themes, developing a common narrative but leaving the freedom to each institution to present their specific point of view. In addition, agreeing on a common theme would be beneficial for the citizens' understanding. In fact, if all the institution focus on one topic, citizens can better follow a precise issue and engage better in a dialogue, appreciating the different perspectives provided by the institutions. This process, unfortunately, cannot be applied with the 10 priorities of Juncker's Commission. Due to their wide purpose and their huge variety of topics, the 10 Priorities cannot be communicated at the same time, without creating confusion in the audience. However, they can represent a starting point for finding a common topic to be adopted.

Another good reason to start again an inter-institutional dialogue is the opportunity to coordinate among institutions and use the resources for communication in a more efficient way. There are different fields, where such coordination can be effective.

A concrete example of an initiative, which can benefit from an inter-institutional coordination, is the pilot campaign "EU is working for You". It has been the first case of EU communication on television, run between November 2014 and March 2015. The project was rather successful, reaching 100 million of citizens in six Member States; with an audience around 27-30 millions, who can recall the spots. This pilot project has been entirely run by the Commission without a direct involvement of the Member States and of other institutions. Moreover, due to its limited purpose and the relatively small budget it reached only six member states. The positive feedback from this campaign shows that, involving the actual stakeholders, the scope of the action can be surely widened. A partnership among Commission, Parliament and Council would boost further the positive results. On one hand, it may imply a longer negotiation process but, on the other hand, it can produce a bigger and more cost-efficient communication campaign, able to deliver a message to a larger number of countries. But the Member States have to be on board.

In conclusion, a persistency in emphasising contrasts among the institutions, limiting the cooperation in communication cannot be beneficial in a long term perspective. In the short period, a more competitive environment may be useful to achieve faster and more concrete results. However, the divergences among institutions may seriously hinder the smooth path of the decision-making process. For example, it is hard for the MSs to accept, that the institutions employ the budget to run corporate communication campaigns, which promote the image of the institutions but do not improve the quality of life of the EU citizens.

In substance, a new more political Commission has to be aware not only of its new political role but also of the political price of an open contraposition among institutions and the absence of whatsoever cooperation with the national communication authorities.

74



**Daniele Esposito** has worked from February 2015 to January 2015 as a trainee for the Transparency Unit of the Council of the European Union in Brussels. He is currently working as export consultant in Riga.

Daniele holds a Master's Degree in European Economy and Business Law in Rome and a Master's Degree in European Studies in Bremen. He is monitoring and studying the development of the EU communication since two years and he wrote his thesis about Inter-institutional EU Communication and EU Brand.

# What are the democratic issues at stake for European communication?

By Michaël Malherbe

At the international conference 'Europe in online media' which took place on 26th and 27th May at the Institute of Communication Science in Paris, Romain Badouard, lecturer at the University of Cergy-Pontoise presented the main lessons learnt from a pan-European study on Europe in online media...

## 1. Rise in power of new civil society movements

New forms of collective mobilisation relating to civil society movements are developing throughout Europe (Podemos, Syriza, etc.). These movements are brewing on the one hand due to a demand for more democracy: transparency, responsibility, and above all a desire for self-determination. On the other hand, they come as a result of hostility to the EU's economic policies of austerity, which creates a feeling of dispossession.

## 2. Worsening of the European democratic deficit

Self-determination and dispossession are two forces widening the gap between politically-engaged citizens outside of traditional political arenas and European policy-makers.

Three indicators illustrate this pan-European trend:

- The rise of Eurosceptic and anti-European parties, currently represented by 140 MEPs;
- Public opinion's rejection of the direction of European integration, the EU is increasingly perceived in a negative light even though populations continue to be part of it;
- Electoral abstention at the European elections is constantly on the rise, the symbolic 50% mark has been easily surpassed at every election since 1999.

## 3. A crisis in trust as well in communication

Communication with citizens is not part of the DNA of European integration, as public support for the project is assumed despite the fact that it did not exist to begin with.

The implementation of the single market and the euro exposed the need for citizen support and gave rise to an EU governmental reform.

## 4. An experimental and participative approach for political and public communication

In order to create adhesion and to give citizens the power to make decisions, a participative approach of public policies is being implemented on a European scale.

For 20 years now, European institutions have also been engag-

ing in a communications policy based on experimentation, particularly in the digital sector.

## 5. The role of media in the rise of Euro-scepticism

The national and/ or general media's lack of interest in European affairs is unfortunately very evident.

New dynamics are emerging, for example new European media such as Politico Europe, Euronews, Contexte, MyEurop and Café Babel or new European collaborations, such as the LENA agreements between major press outlets as well as ad hoc collaborations at the time of the LuxLeaks.

The question of European voice in the media is equally significant as we know that 80% of those who speak on television belong to the elite (politicians, experts and civil servants) whilst the civil society cannot make its voice heard, except on environmental and social issues.

## 6. The new democratic context in EU Member states

In sum, the study about Europe in online media outlines new perspectives that rely on a demand for more respect and equality in terms of who speaks in public debate as well as on greater consideration of different points of view in public decision making.

Ultimately, respecting the voice of civil society and taking into account particularities in the decision making process are the major democratic issues of European communication today.

## Quels sont les enjeux démocratiques de la communication européenne ?

À l'occasion du colloque international « L'Europe dans les médias en ligne » organisé les 26 et 27 mai derniers à l'Institut des Sciences de la Communication à Paris, Romain Badouard, maître de conférences à l'Université de Cergy-Pontoise a présenté les principaux enseignements de l'étude paneuropéenne de l'Europe dans les médias en ligne...

### 1. Montée en puissance de nouveaux mouvements de la société civile

De nouvelles formes de mobilisation collective se développent un peu partout en Europe autour de mouvements de la société civile (Podemos, Syriza, etc.). Cette effervescence se caractérise

d'une part par une revendication pour plus de démocratie : transparence, responsabilité, et surtout une volonté d'auto-détermination, et d'autre part par une hostilité aux politiques économiques austéritaires de l'UE, se traduisant par un sentiment de dépossession.

## 2. Aggravation du déficit démocratique européen

Auto-détermination et dépossession sont les deux vecteurs d'un fossé qui s'agrandit entre des citoyens mobilisés en dehors des arènes politiques traditionnelles et les décideurs publics européens.

Trois indicateurs illustrent cette tendance paneuropéenne :

- Montée des partis eurosceptiques et antieuropéens, représentés actuellement par 140 eurodéputés ;
- Rejet dans l'opinion publique de l'orientation de la construction européenne, l'UE est de plus en plus perçue de manière négative même si l'attachement des populations demeure encore ;
- Abstention électorale aux européennes en hausse constante, la barre symbolique des 50% est allègrement franchie à chaque scrutin depuis 1999.

## 3. Une crise de confiance qui est aussi une crise de communication

La communication auprès des citoyens ne fait partie de l'ADN de la construction européenne, puisque l'adhésion des citoyens au projet, forcément acquise, ne comptait pas à l'origine.

La mise en place du marché unique et de l'euro a révélé le besoin tardif d'un soutien des citoyens qui s'est traduit par une réforme de la gouvernance de l'UE.

## 4. Une approche expérimentale et participative de la communication politique et publique

Afin de créer de l'adhésion et d'associer les citoyens aux décisions, une approche participative des politiques publiques à l'échelle de l'UE est mise en œuvre.

Les institutions européennes se lancent également dans une communication politique fondée sur des expérimentations, en particulier dans le numérique, depuis maintenant 20 ans.

## 5. Le rôle des médias dans la progression de l'euroscepticisme

Dans les médias nationaux et/ou généralistes, le désintérêt pour les affaires européennes n'est malheureusement plus à prouver.

De nouvelles dynamiques émergent, comme par exemple de nouveaux médias européens comme Politico Europe, Euronews, Contexte, MyEurop ou Café Babel ou de nouvelles collaborations européennes, comme les accords LENA entre des grands titres de la presse ou des collaborations ponctuelles autour des Lux-Leaks.

L'enjeu de la prise de parole sur l'Europe dans les médias est également clé lorsque l'on sait que 80% de ceux qui s'expriment à la télévision appartiennent aux élites (politiques, experts et fonctionnaires) tandis que la société civile ne peut pas faire entendre sa voix, à part sur les questions environnementales ou sociales.

## 6. Le nouveau contexte démocratique dans les Etats-membres de l'UE

Au total, l'étude de l'Europe dans les médias en ligne trace de nouvelles perspectives reposant sur une demande de plus de respect et d'égalité des prises de parole dans le débat public et sur une attente d'une meilleure prise en compte des différents points de vue dans la décision publique.

**En définitive, respect des prises de parole de la société civile et prise en compte des particularités dans la décision constituent aujourd'hui les deux enjeux démocratiques majeurs de la communication européenne.**



**Michaël Malherbe** is a Digital Strategist at Cohn & Wolfe, an international Public Relations agency and a regular lecturer in the following master's courses: "European Studies" at the Sorbonne-Paris III and "European Affairs" of the Sorbonne-Paris IV. He occasionally also lectures for the ENA and Sciences-Po Lille. Since 2007, he has managed the blog "Décrypter la communication européenne": [lacommeuropeenne.fr](http://lacommeuropeenne.fr)

# Why is the EU communication strategy inaudible?

By Michaël Malherbe

Today – namely under the new Juncker Commission after the renewal of the European Parliament in 2014 – the EU communication strategy is becoming increasingly inaudible. Why is this?

**Personal communication or communication embodied by the commissioners does not count as a European communication policy**

The European Commission no longer has a Commissioner responsible for a communication portfolio; the president has assumed direct authority of DG COMM but until now has not formulated any strategy beyond a few pages on the role of Commissioners as spokespersons of the institution and the reorganisation of this department.

**Institutional/ corporate communication of the European Commission does not count as an EU communication strategy**

After the unilateral withdrawal of the European Commission in favour of a unilateral institutional 'corporate' communication plan, which upon evaluation is hardly convincing, the inter-institutional approach defined in the strategy 'Communicating Europe in partnership' is also at a standstill.

Moreover, the project developed by the CoR on an inter-institutional and multi-annual EU communication plan, aimed in particular at decentralising communication, although ambitious and unifying, is still in limbo.

**Communication with citizens does not count as a European communication strategy**

Furthermore, the EU communication strategy, by concentrating on reducing the democratic deficit of the EU, seems to be confined to an almost singular approach of better communicating with citizens. All actions, all discourse seem now to aim for this sole objective, however important pursuing this objective might be.

In sum, the EU communication strategy is currently suffering from two weaknesses:

- On the one hand, weak conceptualisation does little to unite the feeble means provided by the European institutions to communicate and;
- On the other hand, simplified wording destabilises messages for the unilateral benefit of citizens.

In one phrase, today's EU communication strategy is like an orchestra of untuned instruments, each playing its own part and creating a melody that is neither harmonious nor audible.

## Pourquoi la stratégie de communication de l'UE est illisible ?

Aujourd'hui – c'est-à-dire sous la nouvelle Commission Juncker à la suite du renouvellement du Parlement européen en 2014 – la stratégie de communication de l'UE devient de plus en plus illisible. Pourquoi ?

**La communication incarnée / personnelle des Commissaires ne fait pas une politique de communication européenne**

La Commission européenne ne dispose plus de Commissaire titulaire d'un portefeuille à la communication ; le président s'est octroyé la tutelle directe sur la DG COMM mais jusqu'à présent n'a pas formulé de stratégie, au-delà d'une note de quelques pages sur le rôle des Commissaires comme porte-parole de l'institution et la réorganisation du service des porte-parole.

**La communication institutionnelle / corporate de la Commission européenne ne fait pas la communication de l'UE**

L'approche interinstitutionnelle définie dans la stratégie « Communiquer l'Europe en partenariat » est également au point mort, après le retrait unilatéral de la Commission européenne au profit d'une action de communication institutionnelle « corporate » unilatérale dont l'évaluation peine à convaincre.

En outre, le projet d'un plan de communication interinstitutionnel et pluriannuel de l'UE développé par le CoR, visant notamment à décentraliser la communication, quoiqu'ambitieux et fédérateur, est resté dans les limbes.

**La communication auprès des citoyens ne fait pas une stratégie de communication européenne**

Par ailleurs, la stratégie de communication de l'UE, à force de se concentrer sur la priorité de résorber le déficit démocratique de l'UE, semble s'être enfermée dans une démarche quasi monotâche de mieux communiquer auprès des citoyens. Toutes les actions, tous les discours ne semblent plus viser que ce seul objectif, quelque soit l'importance de le poursuivre.

Au total, la stratégie de communication de l'UE souffre actuellement d'une double faiblesse :

d'une part, une conceptualisation déficiente qui ne fédère pas les faibles moyens consacrés par les institutions européennes pour communiquer et ;

d'autre part, une formulation simplificatrice qui déséquilibre les messages au profit unilatéral des citoyens.

**En une phrase, la stratégie de communication de l'UE correspond actuellement à un orchestre dont les instruments seraient désaccordés, chacun jouant sa partition et du coup la mélodie n'est pas harmonieuse et audible.**



# Towards a more effective development policy

*Promoting the involvement of economic and social actors in development cooperation*

By Cédric Cabanne and Silvia Aumair

On 20 March 2015, the External Relations Section of the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) hosted a conference on **Promoting the involvement of economic and social actors in development cooperation**, which was attended by Neven Mimica, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development. Participants also included representatives from the EU institutions, employers' organisations, trade unions and other economic and social organisations.

Traditionally, development aid has been a matter confined mostly to donors and recipients - that is, on the one hand, the European Commission, the Member States, UN agencies and development organisations, and, on the other hand, developing countries' governments and NGOs. Over the last decade, however, additional players have appeared on the development scene, namely civil society organisations and socio-economic stakeholders.

The goal of the conference was to demonstrate how these new players contributed to development aid, and look at what could be done to involve them in general development policy and thus streamline the many different support programmes.

## Link to the European Year for Development 2015

The aims of the event were also in line with the overall objectives of the European Year for Development 2015, and were threefold:

- to promote recognition and better understanding of economic and social actors in the field of development cooperation, and to raise awareness about the work they are already doing;
- to explore how economic and social actors are represented in the current EU-level development cooperation structure;
- to draw up recommendations to the European Commission based on the specific needs and findings of these organisations in order to better involve them.

## Civil society - an important stakeholder in development policy

In line with these goals, the conference provided a forum for less traditional stakeholders in development policy - businesses, employers' organisations, trade unions, consumers, farmers, foundations, immigrant communities, crowdfunding platforms,

etc. - and offered them the opportunity to demonstrate not only their commitment but also their very successful projects in the developing world. Knowledge-sharing and exchanging expertise were other priorities.

Interesting videos and presentations illustrated how the expertise of workers' and employers' groups, farmers, consumer associations and other non-traditional players helped to find innovative ways to finance development projects, ensure efficient use of development funds and enhance social dialogue and protection of workers.

## Development aid is a core value of the European Union

*"Development policy is not a question of fashion; rather it is deeply rooted in the European Union's core values. Therefore, its profile has to be raised. Where the EU and public authorities are lacking human resources, civil society organisations are willing to step in"*, said EESC president, **Henri Malosse**. For Commissioner Mimica, development policy has to be built on three core elements: understanding, universality and multi-stakeholder engagement. A framework has to be created, including the public and private sectors, NGOs and civil society, whose ties and cooperation need to be strengthened. *"Europe has to move from being the biggest donor to being the most effective donor"*, the Commissioner said. *"Therefore, it is necessary to bundle all initiatives"*.

## Bundling initiatives is the key to success

The EU must uphold its commitments and maintain levels of development funding despite the economic and financial crisis, according to a recent Eurobarometer survey (2015) which shows that 85% of EU citizens believe that Europe should continue to help developing countries in spite of the economic crisis. 65% of EU citizens believe that development aid should even be increased.

*"In this important European Year for Development 2015, we must think beyond this timescale and further raise awareness in order to guarantee continued interest in development issues"*, said José-Maria Zafraur-Narvaiza, President of the External Relations Section at the EESC.

Existing cooperation with traditional actors and donors must be expanded to local economic and social organisations, especially with regard to financing. For local economic and social organisations, financing projects is the greatest challenge. In most cases, the realisation of their projects depends on finding a co-financer. This is why the conference called for a reasonable degree of flexibility in the EU's development policy structure, pointing to framework agreements, funding programmes for civil society, bilateral resources, financing for urgent needs or multiannual agreements as possible solutions. The participants agreed that only when all relevant stakeholders are fully respected and included can the overarching goal of efficient, effective development policy be achieved.

## Civil society stakeholders as mediators

Social and economic stakeholders and organised civil society work closely with ordinary people and respond to their specific needs. Moreover, they often act as intermediaries between the public and political authorities. Civil society organisations help to promote social cohesion, encourage productive activities and decent work, enhance social protection, fight inequalities and reduce dependence on the informal economy. They also play a vital role in promoting good governance.

For all these reasons, cooperation and synergies between them and the existing sector-specific networks are crucial factors in increasing effectiveness.

## The EU as a frontrunner

*"Europe has to lead by example",* said **Viktors Makarovs**, the representative of the Latvian government, which currently holds the Presidency of the European Council. *"The fight for the rule of law and transparency, against tax evasion, and for growth which is not achieved at the expense of our environment or future generations has to unite us in Europe."* The positive spirit of such a policy will inspire many others in both the developed and developing world.

More can be found on the EESC's webpage:

<http://www.eesc.europa.eu/?i=portal.en.events-and-activities-eyd2015-economic-social-actors>.



**Cédric Cabanne**

is currently Administrator at the External Relations (REX) Section of the EESC.

Before joining the EESC, Cédric worked at the European Parliament and for several civil society organizations in France and Belgium.

Cédric studied Geography and Economics at the Institut Daniel Fauché (Université de Toulouse II) and the Faculté Jean Monnet (Université Paris-Sud XI).



**Silvia Aumair**

Is currently a press officer at the EESC. Her previous jobs include political adviser to the deputy governor of Upper Austria, administrator at the Foreign Ministry in Vienna/Austria, policy officer at the EU Delegation in Washington and at DG Energy. She studied Socio-Economics at Johannes-Kepler University in Linz, obtaining a Master's degree with a thesis on the integration of Muslims. While working in Austria she was an active volunteer, caring for asylum seekers, mainly from Afghanistan, and a member of the Gender Equality Commission at the Upper Austrian government.

# The role of social media in Dutch public administration's communication

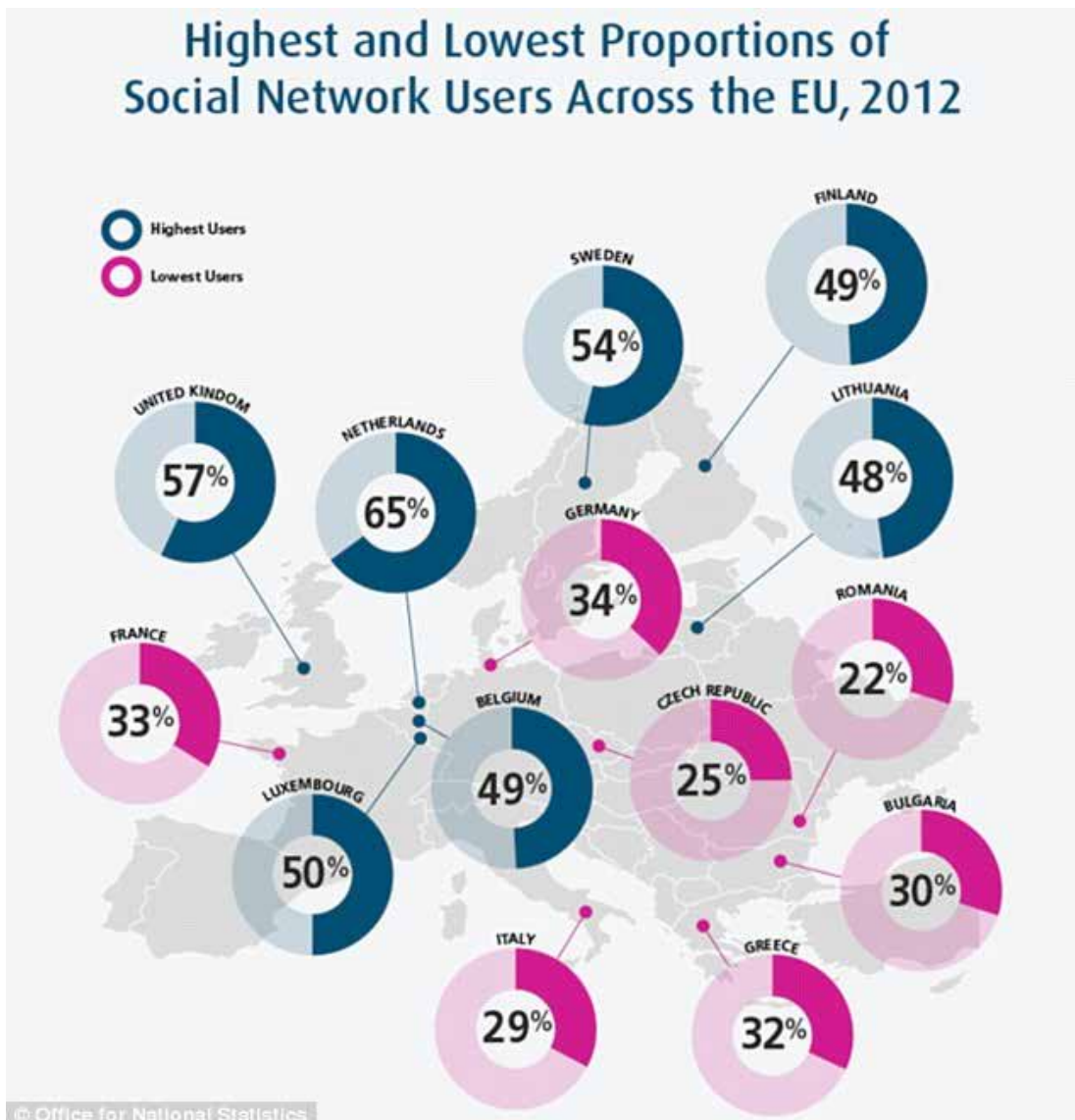
By Milko Vlessing and Adrienne Driest

The availability of mobile internet is perhaps the most important game changer of the decade. We are now after all everywhere and always online. And this is self-evident to more people than just the so-called generation Z (the digital natives born after 1992) By now 4G is almost everywhere available and quicker than most Wi-Fi connections.

Watching TV on line and second screen use has become common in all layers of the population: we consume on average 7 hours of media in 5,5 hours real time. This means that a part of the media consumption is overlapping, media users have begun multi-tasking.

With a population of 17 million a large part of the Dutch population is using social media platforms. Over 9 million Dutch use Facebook, but a shift is becoming apparent: where in the age-group of 39-45 use is still increasing, is it decreasing rapidly amongst the young. For coming groups of young people it will be questionable if they will even start on Facebook or will seek refuge on other social media.

80



Social media used in the Netherlands in comparison with other European countries.



Social media used in the Netherlands in 2014

## Consequences for the public administration

Internet has changed the life of people in the Netherlands to such an extent that this will have undoubtedly consequences for public administration and the way in which it communicates with citizens. It is evident that the classic media of TV and Radio will not reach all target groups by definition. The administration has reacted to this development by adding online media to its toolkit.

The administration communicates a lot less on mass media and budgets for this have been decreasing for years. A good example of this new use is the very successful campaign to promote organ donors where much more use was made of social media and far less of TV spots: the message and the carriers are fine-tuned and tailor made for individuals or groups of individuals.

Especially communication of public administrations through their websites has developed in a positive way in the course of the years. It is interesting to review old government websites using the Wayback machine (<http://archive.org/web/>). Around 2007 these sites were mainly used to send out messages, and each ministry or agency had its own website advocating their policy.

Nowadays information and services are much more targeted at end-users and based on date and user research. Information is well structured, written in an appropriate language, and adapted for a good indexation and accessibility in search engines. The web communication specialists in organisations have become professional and knowhow is centralised.

## Just making good websites is no longer sufficient

Just when government organisations have learned to produce solid websites, meeting complex standards and directives, we see now a new development: citizens (at first the young) leave classic internet and use other platforms such as social media for information access.

Wanting to stay communication effectively with its citizens, public organisations are trying to follow the trend. There is a positive development of web-care (with the use of internet assessing the appreciation you have with your target groups, answering queries and reacting to criticism and solve problems). Especially executive organisations, those that are more in direct contact with their target groups than ministries for instance, have years of experience with this and are active in a targeted way on Twitter. But for a lot of organisations this is still in an embryonic state.



Public administrations can no longer communicate in the traditional fashion to meet its policy targets. Some examples will show that government communication must be directed to where the target group is. And organisations should not just communicate its own message, but should listen better. And for this social media are very useful.

## The case of the HPV (genital infection) vaccination campaign

Although a somewhat outdated case it is one of the prime examples of a deficient classical government communication campaign, the vaccination campaign of 2009.

In 2009 the government called on all 12 year old girls to come forward to be vaccinated against the HPV-virus, a virus that can be the cause for cervical cancer. The administration sent a letter to all girls and their parents to invite them to get the free vaccination. And in addition the administration made available on its own internet portals information, Q&A's on the safety and the efficiency of the vaccine. It was quite surprise when the first turnout was a lot less than expected. The appropriate information was made available on the websites but these did not reach the target groups. They were more active on social media such as Facebook and Twitter, where they were being influenced by a small group of very active opponents of the vaccination policy of the government. These platforms were not known by the administration and therefore it was not present on them. In a sequel to the campaign the government did much better and the campaign met with a lot more successful result.

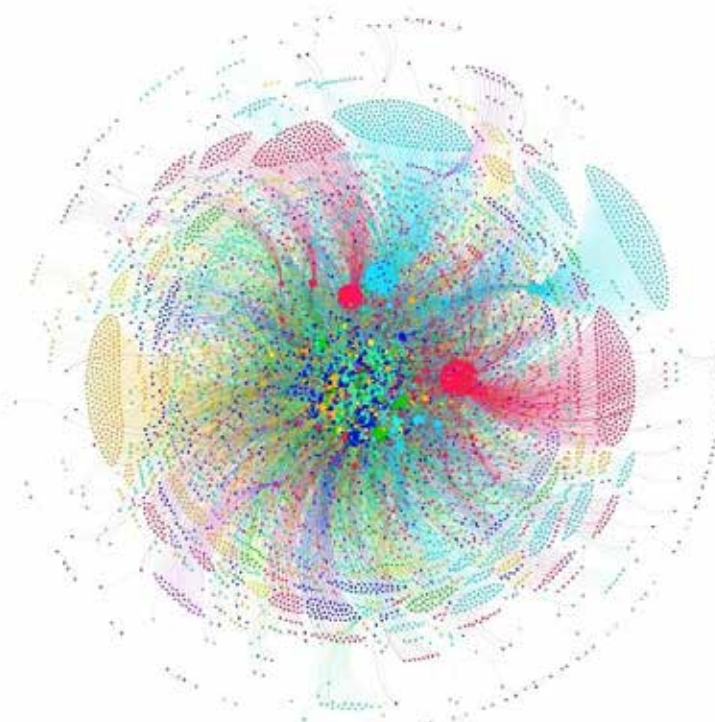
## Second case: PGB alert

The case of PGB alert shows that government communication had better not be a monologue, but that the administration also has to listen.

The PGB (Personally attributed budget, for health care) works as follows: those entitled to care in the Netherlands, can receive this as such or through a personally attributed budget. With this one can hire in care of your own choice at your own conditions. 1 January 2015 the system was changed in that the money was not transferred directly to the end-user but to an agency that played the part of mediator. Both care suppliers and the PGB holders predicted chaos if this was implemented too quickly. This led to a grass-roots movement on social media resulting in so much tweets and media attention that a political debate on PGB was called for that made clear that real problems arose for the end-users.

The movement grew quickly as soon as the first tweets with the hashtag at PGB appeared: many users of Twitter raised the alarm-bells over delayed payments to end-users. It is interesting to see the analysis of these thousands of tweets after the fact: it turned out that a large part of the tweets could be retraced to a tiny number of people, who were capable of activating large networks and could therefore put their issue on the calendar.

A phenomenon such as with the PGB twitter storm can be seen as a bushfire: a fire that starts seemingly from nowhere but that was already brewing underground for some time. One can never prevent these events totally, but public administrations should make better use of these analyses to spot these events sooner and be better prepared to react to it.



Gephi analysis of the twitterstroem using #pgb-alarm

# Social Monitor: #pgbalarm

Twitter 160 Create your own

Conversation Tracker Influencers Content View Media Twitter Instagram Facebook

Date range

Jan 30 - Feb 1

Download XLS

34,766 posts

2,903 users

2,434,615 reach

27,861,452 impressions

## Timeline



## Top Posts

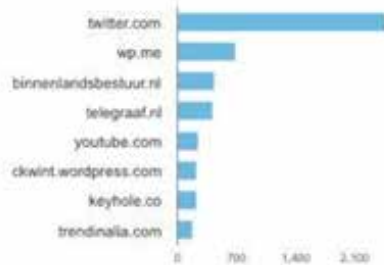
RTs/Likes Kout Recent

Tip: Click on a post's date to be taken to original post.

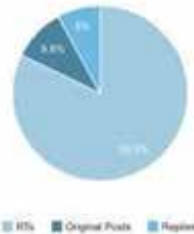
- Mona Keijzer** @MonaKeijzer Jan 30 **325**  
Probeer al ruim een week om problemen bij #SVS over  
uitbetalen #PGB in Kamer aan orde te krijgen. Geen steun  
PvdA / VVD. Dus nu: #PGBalarm
- Michael van Balken** @MichaelvanBalken Jan 30 **146**  
Nu #pgbalarm, alzet #jeugdGGZalarm,  
#rujvertrekeuzalarm, #budgetpolidekkingalarm etc al  
niet genoeg waren. HET IS GEWOON #ZORGALARM!
- Renske Leijten** @RenskeLeijten Jan 31 **121**  
#pgbalarm terecht branding! Regert voorbeelden in mailbox:  
man, betaald al 13jr pgb vs SVS uit (rekkelous), nu rva,  
contracten verbeteren
- Renske Leijten** @RenskeLeijten Jan 31 **100**  
Oude dame mailt: "zorgverleners niet betaald, misschien wil  
Mark Rutte of Edth of Van Rijn me volgende week wel komen  
douchen?" #pgbalarm

## Top Sites

Domain Pages



## Share of Posts



## Most Influential



## Recent Users



## Location

World USA



## Demographics



Social monitoring of the trending topic #pgb-alarm

## The next chapter

We do not have a tailor-made solution, but the above cases show that continuous monitoring, listening and reacting in networks is of vital importance. Only by monitoring what is happening will it be possible to take the right action. We advise to seek more contact with continuous interaction and provide tailor-made information.

As public administrations we have influenced by decades of marketing experience, learned to send our message loud and clear. We are concentrated on communication solutions, where we forget to ask questions and to listen. If we want to communicate effectively we will have to strengthen that part as well.

The development therefore is more in the direction of a continuous communication, in which dialogue primes, rather than a campaign-based communication. And for this you do not have to create a new platform every time. React to others and deliver opinions in existing networks is often a more natural way to reach a dialogue.



**Milko Vlessing** is currently a senior advisor at the Public Information and Communication Service of the Dutch Ministry of General Affairs. Prior to that he has been working for on line and advertising agencies.

Milko holds a Master Degree in Electrical Engineering from Delft University of Technology.

**Adrienne Driest** (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/adriest>) works together with Milko Vlessing for the Public Information and Communications Service (DPC), an agency of the Dutch Ministry of General Affairs, as an on line communication advisor.

DPC provides communications services to all ministries and central government implementing bodies on behalf of the Information Council, in which the central government's communications directors are represented. DPC also publishes central government information on the website [Government.nl](http://Government.nl) and coordinates national campaigns. It is responsible for central media procurement and helps central government improve its communications.



# Facebook Politics & Government Briefing for the Club of Venice

By Elizabeth Linder

Facebook's Politics & Government team, represented at past Club of Venice meetings by its founder Elizabeth Linder, has been pleased to serve as the point of contact at Facebook for the Club of Venice since 2011, when the team was founded.

Today, Facebook has a number of new (free) products available for public administration use. The Politics & Government team has also grown, meaning that we offer more support for trainings, workshops, advice, and operational and product support.

Crucially, the Politics & Government does not charge anything for the services we provide. This is a critical tenant of our mission, which offers equal service to *any* public administration or political figure across the Europe, Middle East & Africa region irrespective of size or financial spend. It simply doesn't matter. What matters to our team is that we are always available for public administrations and public figures to ask their questions and learn about the products and trends that work on Facebook.

We invite members of the Club of Venice at any time to ask us questions, hear about the newest specialized products for verified Facebook pages, or solicit our help to host trainings and workshops in Brussels or your host countries to enhance your

understanding of Facebook. Our door is always open, and thanks to our growing team, we remain ever more available to support you as efficiently as possible.

To get in touch with Facebook's Politics & Government team, you are welcome to email [PandG@fb.com](mailto:PandG@fb.com). Alternatively, you are welcome to contact Elizabeth Linder ([elizabeth@fb.com](mailto:elizabeth@fb.com)) or Ashley Hook ([ahook@fb.com](mailto:ahook@fb.com)).

If Facebook were a country, it would be the largest country in the world by population. With 1.39 billion people actively using Facebook, it is an incredible resource to connect directly with citizens in all EU member states and beyond, thus opening an opportunity to build and sustain trust amongst the citizens that matter so very much to the future of Europe.

The Politics & Government team believes that bringing people closer to their public administrations and public officials will support the broader society in having the very conversations that will enable us to benefit more robustly from our collective creativities, knowledge, and expertise.

85

## A brief review of new Facebook products for public administrations and politicians:

- 1. Page verification.** Page verification is the blue tick-mark that appears next to the page title. Verification gives you access to specialized tools and is available for most official government pages. For Members of the Club of Venice to request verification, please contact [PandG@fb.com](mailto:PandG@fb.com).
- 2. Question and Answer tool.** The question and answer tool can be added to verified pages. The tool allows page administrators to easily and efficiently answer people's questions on any topic of choice. For example, embassies have used the Q & A to answer questions about consular services issues; mayors like Anne Hidalgo have used the Q & A tool to answer questions about the city of Paris; Prime Ministers like David Cameron have used the Q & A to talk about elections-related issues; Members of Parliament like Agnieszka Pomaska have used the Q & A to talk about new legislation related to family affairs.
- 3. Mentions application.** The Mentions application allows public figures to manage their Facebook presences with specialized features. For example, you can see topics that are trending in your region; any time that someone on Facebook has mentioned your name in a public space on Facebook; and a newsfeed to easily follow other public pages. Once you have the app, if you shake your phone you will also have a direct line to Facebook to report bugs or issues.



4. **Polling application.** The polling application can be added to a Facebook page on the back-end, and allows you to poll your Facebook fans on questions you may have. For example, you can use the polling app to say, "What issue matters to you most right now? Education; the Environment; Tax; Immigration."
5. **Country Analysis.** Our team is happy to provide a country analysis pack for your confidential reference. This allows you to see the number of people using Facebook in your country, the gender and age breakdowns, most popular Facebook pages in that country, etc. The country analysis can be useful to understand the potential audience you can reach by using your Facebook page effectively.
6. **Tailored Facebook page briefings.** If you administer a page with more than 10,000 active users connected to it, we can send you a tailored briefing on your page. These are produced by request and are confidential only to people with access to administer your page.



**Elizabeth Linder** is Facebook's Politics & Government Specialist for the Europe, Middle East & Africa region. Elizabeth has been with Facebook for 7 years – longer than 98.5% of current Facebook employees – and has spent the majority of her tenure at Facebook based in London working in more than 40 countries across her region. As the founder and head of her division in EMEA, Elizabeth trains and advises politicians, government officials, civil society leaders, and diplomats on using Facebook to effectively communicate with citizens.

Elizabeth has written and spoken extensively about the intersection of politics and society in a digitally-connected era. Her Tedx talk, "Conversational Leadership", examines the role that Facebook and other leading communications technologies serve in persuading political and government leaders to value conversation as a core attribute of their leadership capabilities. Elizabeth has spoken in Parliaments across her region; serves as Facebook's liaison with Royal Households to develop their Facebook presences; and has personally advised hundreds of politicians, ambassadors, heads of state, and influential political leaders. She has been asked to present at Chatham House, Wilton Park, Ditchley Park, NATO, the European Parliament, the U.S. Institute for Peace, OECD, and the U.S.-Jordan Business Forum, among others. Elizabeth represents Facebook on leading international networks, including CNBC Arabia, CNN, the BBC, the Huffington Post, EurActiv, and others.

Prior to building the Politics & Government team at Facebook across EMEA, Elizabeth spent three years on Facebook's International Communications team, where she opened Facebook's offices in Hyderabad, India; and on Google/YouTube's Global Communications and Public Policy team based in California. A native Californian, Elizabeth graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Princeton University, where she specialized in 19th-century French and Italian literature and history. She graduated from the Georgetown Foreign Policy Leadership Program and the Legatum Institute Summer School. Elizabeth currently serves on the Board of Trustees at the Asia-Scotland Institute and on the Development Committee at the Legatum Institute in London.

# Introduction to the preliminary programme of EUROPCOM 2015

Brussels, 21-22 October 2015

At the last conference EUROPCOM held in October 2014, IMAGINING EUROPE", in the aftermath of the new EP's mandate and on the eve of the appointment of President Juncker's Commissioners' Board, the professionals who attended the event agreed with the need for the European institutions to propose a new way to deal with EU issues at all governance levels, that citizens' reconciliation with the EU was a political and communication challenge and that success was only possible if there is a deep and clear vision.

Intervening on that occasion, the EC's former President Herman van Rompuy indicated that "the EU has lost innocence and gained in maturity". Europe was traditionally communicated as an ideal of peace, but the increasing worries about the global crisis and the impact of austerity measures and technocratic approach had generated citizens' perception of the EU as "an unwelcome intruder".

Government and Institutions' communicators' role in October 2014 was to seek joint strategies to reconnect with citizens and regain their confidence in the EU's project.

What has happened since then? After almost one year full of

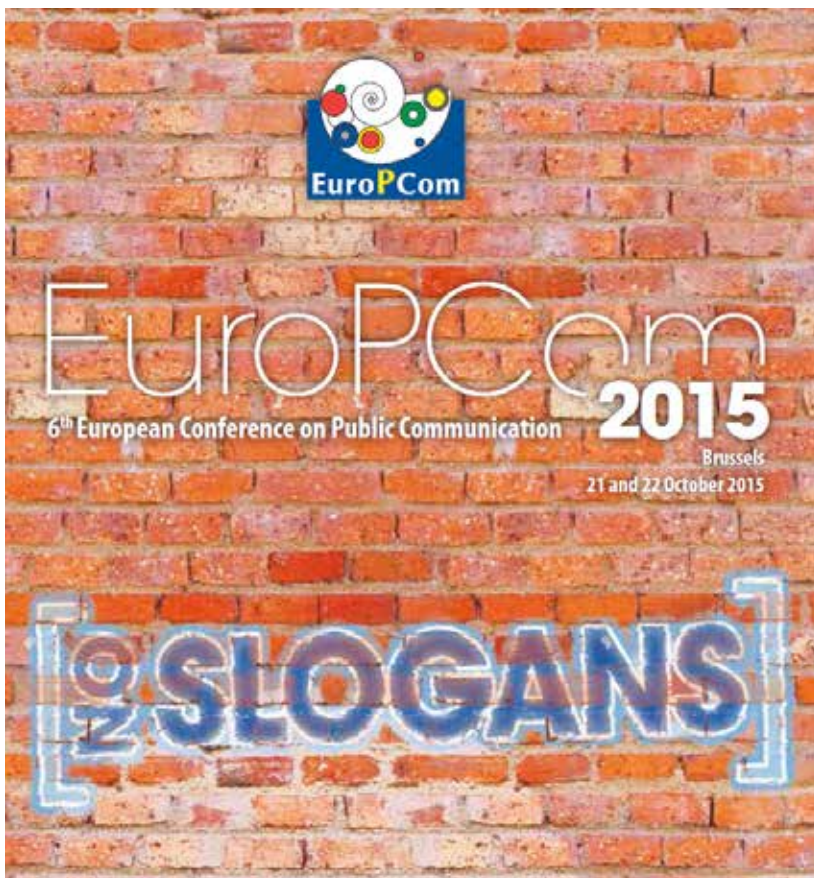
turbulences (terrorist acts and threats, different views on how to handle migration, the Greek debt crisis, the complicated TTIP negotiations and communication struggles in the framework of the Russia-Ukraine crisis) the situation hasn't certainly improved.

By recognizing that communication cannot be a substitute for a lack of tangible political results should we admit that EU-communication is "mission impossible", regardless to the profile of the key players and to the level at which one communicates (local, regional, national, trans-national or from Brussels) and that communicators should review their objectives downwards?

**The title chosen for EuroPCom 2015** (this is the 6th annual conference of this type) is **"NO SLOGANS"**. There is no more time for speculations and for abstract objectives. There cannot be any successful European project if the political issues are not tackled without prejudices and if the communication efforts to address them in close contact with the public audiences are not handled in partnership.

This year, the conference will be organized back-to-back with the annual meeting of the 500 Europe Direct Information Centres (EDICs) and will be focusing more on communication and information provision at local level, with some of the EDICs' representatives driving some thematic panels. The question rises if and how the key issue of communication in partnership (a true partnership between institutions and national authorities, based on joint planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation) will be debated. We wish our colleagues from the Committee of the Regions a successful conference and look forward to the results of the event.

Here below, a **short overview of the EuroPCom 2015 preliminary programme**, which is downloadable in its entirety from the dedicated portal of the Committee of the Regions' website: <http://cor.europa.eu/en/events/europcom/Documents/2650-preliminaryProgramme.pdf>



### Wednesday, 21 October 2015

<b>10:00</b> <b>11:15</b>	Under pressure: how politicians respond to public demands (1) Keynote lecture	A Common [EU] narrative (2) Workshop	Strike your deal: pitching agencies (3) Keynote lecture	Weighing the impact: evaluating who hears what in EU communications (4) Keynote lecture	Voicing citizen concerns in the policy process (5) Open session	How to make EU news local news? (6) Workshop
<b>11:30</b> <b>12:45</b>	Coping with online criticism (7) Workshop	Drivers of an EU identity (8) Open session	New trends in government campaigning (9) Keynote lecture	How to make EU news local news? (bis) (10) Workshop	How to lobby for EU democracy (11) Workshop	R.S.V.P.: The power of local EU events (12) Workshop
<b>12:45</b> <b>14:00</b>	Networking lunch					
<b>14:00</b> <b>15:30</b>	Online communities: More than a comms tactic (13) Workshop	Euroseptimania (14) Workshop	Preaching or teaching: educational communication tools (15) Workshop	R.S.V.P.: The power of local EU events (bis) (16) Workshop	Digital transformation of government organisations (17) Keynote lecture	National round-tables (18) Open session
<b>16:00</b> <b>18:00</b>	Plenary session (19)					
<b>18:00</b> <b>19:30</b>	Networking reception					

88

### Thursday, 22 October 2015

<b>09:30</b> <b>10:45</b>	Transparency: a duty or an opportunity? (20) Keynote lecture	Seeking common ground: communicating on migration (21) Workshop	Science or common sense: communication management education (22) Open session	Images that tell a story (23) Workshop
<b>11:00</b> <b>12:15</b>	Reform the norm (24) Workshop	Radical Europe (25) Workshop	Analysis of the Eurobarometer survey (26) Keynote lecture	Open EU: integrative decision-making practices (27) Open session
<b>12:30</b> <b>13:30</b>	Closing session (28)			
<b>13:30</b> <b>14:30</b>	Networking lunch			
<b>14:00</b> <b>16:00</b>	Unconference: EU Open Policy-Making (29) Open Session			

The plenary sessions will include a presentation of a new regional Eurobarometer survey mapping the opinion of 50 000 citizens in more than 170 regions of the 28 EU Member States, followed by a panel debate with high-level experts to discuss possible follow-up initiatives and the state of EU citizenship. The event will also congratulate the winners of the 2015 European Public Communication Awards and will be concluded by an “unconference” session driven by the Democratic Society, which will focus on Open Policy-Making in Europe.

Text by Vincenzo Le Voci and Philippe Caroyez, members of the advisory board of EuroPcom.

# CLUB OF VENICE



## Provisional Programme 2015-2018

2015
Sofia, 26-27 March 2015 Seminar on Digital Communication Trends (in cooperation with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Wilfried Maertens Centre and SEECOM)
Vienna, 11-12 June 2015 Plenary meeting
Milano, 22-23 October 2015 Plenary meeting
Brussels (or another MS' capital), November 2015 (date to be defined) Thematic seminar
2016
Santorini, February/March 2016 Thematic seminar
The Hague, May 2016 Plenary meeting
Brussels (or other MS' capital), October 2016 (tbc) Seminar + preparation of the plenary meeting
Venice, November 2016 Plenary meeting
2017
Brussels (or other MS' capital), early spring 2017 Thematic seminar
Malta, 18-19 May 2017 (dates to be confirmed) Plenary meeting
Brussels (or other MS' capital), autumn 2017 (tbc) Thematic seminar
Venice, November 2017 Plenary meeting
2018
Brussels (or other MS' capital), early spring 2018 Thematic seminar
Vilnius, June 2018 Plenary meeting
Brussels (or other MS' capital), autumn 2018 (tbc) Thematic seminar
Venice, November 2018 Plenary meeting



# Club of Venice (CoV) Plenary Meeting

22-23 October 2015  
Milan, Italy



Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri  
DIPARTIMENTO PER LE POLITICHE EUROPEE



CLUB DI VENEZIA

## Club of Venice (CoV) Plenary Meeting

Milan, Italy

22-23 October 2015

### DRAFT AGENDA - as of 11 September 2015

*(Meeting languages: Italian / English / French. Interpretation will be provided).*

90

#### Wednesday, October 21st 2015

Optional social programme:

18.00h

Informal evening at .....  
(CoV - Steering Group's preliminary coordination)

#### Thursday, October 22nd 2015



**08.45 – 9.20h**

**Guests' arrival, registration**

Venue:  
Palazzo Le Stelline  
Corso Magenta, 61, 20123 Milano  
Tel.: +39 02 481 8431

**09.20 – 09.45h**

**Opening Session**

Welcome statements by:

- the Italian Government hosting authorities: [Sandro Gozi, Undersecretary of State for European Affairs] [Diana Agosti, Head of the PM Office Department for European Policies]

- representatives from the European Parliament and European Commission in Milan offices
- Introductory speech by Stefano Rolando, President of the Club of Venice

**09.45 – 12.30h**

**Plenary Session I: Communication in Europe and on Europe : today's challenges for governments and institutions**

This session will discuss trends in citizens' involvement/engagement in the European project and the objectives and impact of the referendum as instrument to detect public opinion, facilitate governmental orientations and decision-making in an era of social, financial and political instabilities and turbulences.

**Moderator: Erik den Hoedt, Director, Public Information and Communication Office, Ministry of General Affairs, The Netherlands**

**09.45.00 – 10.05h**

**Key Note speaker: Alex Aiken, PM Office, Executive Director of Government Communications, United Kingdom**

Alex will focus on the UK authorities' communication approach on their way towards the referendum on the EU

**10.05 – 10.20h**

***Coffee Break***

**10.20 – 11.00h**

First round of exchange of views on the session theme and reactions to the key note

**11.00 – 11.45h**

Reflections on citizens' consultations and citizens' engagement

Contributions:

- Lefteris Kretsos, Secretary-General for Information and Communication of the Greek Government
- Paul Schmidt, Secretary-General of the Austrian Society for European Policy
- Poland, on the referendum as a political tool to monitor public opinion and civic engagement
- the role of ".gov" websites and analytical/monitoring tools' in detecting citizens' expectations

**11.45 – 12.30h**

exchange of views with government and institutions representatives

**12.30-13.45h**

***Buffet Lunch***

**13.45 – 17.15h**

**Plenary Session II: Today's social and political trends and Media Freedom**

**Moderator: Alberto Nardelli, Data Editor, The Guardian (tbc)**

**13.45 - 14.05h**

**Key Note speaker: Oliver Vujovic, Head of the South-East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO)**

Session II will focus on media freedom, including today's crisis of confidence in media and political communication, for an open exchange of views on strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and shadows ("what's at stake and for whom").

As a follow-up to Vienna's plenary, participants will also discuss the potential added value of increased strategic support to on line and traditional media (accuracy, trustworthiness, quickness of communication flows in times of crisis and impact on the audiences).

**14.05 – 17.15h**

*Reactions to the key note and follow-up round table* - will include contributions from:

- Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) and South-East Europe Media Organisation (SEEMO), on specific surveys and reports
- Austria (Wolfgang Trimmel) (feedback on a report on "public value" from the national broadcaster)
- EESC (main findings of a joint EBU/EESC conference "Independence of public service media in enlargement countries" held in spring 2015 and on the theme "European media and informed citizenship")
- Latvia (Evelina Melbarzde) (main findings of Member States' replies to a questionnaire on media monitoring activities launched by the former Latvian Presidency of the Council of the EU in the context of the Russia-Ukraine crisis)

**(15.15 – 15.30h**

**Coffee Break)**

**19.30h**

**Official Dinner** (venue: to be defined), **hosted by the Italian authorities**

- Welcome address(es) by:
  - Fiorenza Barazzoni, Director, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Office for the Internal Market and Competitiveness, EU Policies Department (tbc)
  - one member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice

**Friday, October 23rd 2015**

**08.30 – 9.00h**

**Guests' arrival, registration**

*Venue: Palazzo Le Stelline  
Corso Magenta, 61, 20123 Milano*

**09.00 – 9.15h**

Introductory speech by Hans-Gert Pöttering, President of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, former President of the European Parliament

**09.15 – 12.00h**

**Plenary Session III: EXPO: lessons learned for sustainable growth, development and environmental care**

**Moderator: Barbara Altomonte, Head of the Communication Unit, Presidency of the Council of Ministers, Office for the Internal Market and Competitiveness, EU Policies Department (*tbc*)**

**09.15 – 09.35h**

**Key Note speaker: Roberto Arditti, Director of the Institutional Relations, EXPO Milano 2015**

**09.35 - 09.50h**

**Coffee Break**

**09.50 - 12.00h**

Participants will elaborate on the main concept lying behind the Milan EXPO communication campaign for the exhibition and on the whole communication plan, including crisis communication aspects.

This session will include:

- reactions to the key-note and exchanges of views on the implementation of EXPO's communication strategy
- a case-study on a national presence at EXPO (focusing on the topic "Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life")
- contributions on EXPO-related themes such as the communication strategies on sustainable development and climate change, given the proximity with COP-21 Conference in Paris and the interrelation with the European Year of Development 2015
- a contribution from the European Commission on the recovery from the economic crisis ("boosting employment, growth and investments")

93

**12.00 – 12.15h**

**Closing Session**

Concluding Remarks:

- Reflections on the issues emerged during the plenary meeting
- CoV Planning for 2015-2016

**Optional social programme**

**13.30h**

**Visit to the EXPO MILANO 2015**

The **Expo Site** can be reached by underground (**Linea 1, Rho Fiera Milano metro station**).

Duomo and Cadorna stations are both on Line 1, where they connect to the city's other underground lines. Travel time to the Expo Site is about 25' from Piazza Duomo, 20' from Cadorna station, 35' from Central Station and 30' from Garibaldi station.





## Acknowledgments

The Club expresses its gratitude to its members from Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Latvia, The Netherlands, Austria, Poland, Sweden and Serbia  
the Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee of the Club,  
the Members Emeriti, the EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator, the European Parliament, the European Commission,  
the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions.

Many thanks also to Christian Spahr (Konrad Adenauer Foundation), Sanda Svetoka (NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence), Verena Ringler (Mercator Foundation), Vessela Tcherneva (European Council of Foreign Relations), Edit Schlafer (Women Without Borders), John Verrico (US National Association of Government Communicators), Judit Erfelder and Sandra Luger (Gaisberg), Nick Jones (Visa Europe), Elizabeth Linder (Facebook), Michael Malherbe, Daniele Esposito and all our other external collaborators for their proactive support.

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



