#11
2018

convergences

Public communication in Europe | Communication publique en Europe

FOCUS ON:

Lessons from the history of Government Communications

November 2017 Venice plenary:

- follow-up to the Stratcom London Charter
- capacity building in progress
- European Year for Cultural Heritage 2018

Luxembourg 2018 seminar: Open Government and Open Data

Stratcom and countering disinformation

Digital technology and democratic values [Re]connecting and interacting with citizens

Club of Venice | Club de Venise

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Ce qui change c'est que rien ne change, ou si peu …

Par Philippe Caroyez et Vincenzo Le Voci

> *Grands changements ! qu'ils racontent.*
>
> *Comment ça ? Rien n'est changé en vérité. Ils continuent à s'admirer et c'est tout.*
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> *Et ça n'est pas nouveau non plus.*
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> *Des mots, et encore pas beaucoup, même parmi les mots, qui sont changés ! Deux ou trois par-ci, par-là, des petits…*
>
> Louis-Ferdinand Céline [1]

Nous l'avons souligné à plusieurs reprises, au nombre des vertus du Club de Venise figure le fait qu'il est pour les communicateurs des services publics le seul lieu **permanent** où il est possible d'échanger sur ses actions et d'apprendre sur celles des autres services et institutions.

Comme déjà souvent, c'est un apport irremplaçable du Club quand un responsable d'un service national introduit « chez lui » ce qu'il a vu présenté par un autre membre, mieux encore : quand une forme de coopération nait entre eux.

Au-delà de nos actions, dans nos métiers et services, tous (tant bien que mal) opérons une « veille des tendances », tendances à l'œuvre ou qui se dessinent …

Ces tendances se donnent également à voir dans les actions innovantes qui sont présentées au sein du Club ; elles font aussi l'objet de recherches spécifiques, comme celles présentées lors de notre dernière rencontre à Venise en novembre 2017, où il était question de sciences du comportement et de la « logique » décisionnelle (avec ces nudge, budge, boost, …) autant que des chatbots, de la stratégie de contenu et de son design et de la communication « conversante » entre autres tendances notoires.

Comme nous le disions, il y a toujours de cela dans nos échanges ; ici nous soulignons une volonté plus systématique.

Il y a de cela quelques années, nos homologues néerlandais nous ont montré la voie, en quelque sorte : saisissant l'occasion d'un débat officiel sur la communication publique dans leur pays, ils ont mené une recherche pour dégager des tendances évolutives qu'ils ont veillé à intégrer dans leur politique. Là où d'autres auraient mis l'accent sur les « attentes des citoyens » (ce qu'ils ont également fait), un accent particulier a été réservé finalement aux conditions de la communication publique et de son évolution.

Vint aussi dans nos actions la tendance au « tout au web » et l'effet quasi magique des réseaux (dits) sociaux, allant jusqu'à concevoir une « diplomatie digitale » … pouvant faire triompher Mc Luhan, quand le medium devient le message. L'évolution technologique, ici dans les moyens de communication, est certes (de tous temps) un facteur évident de changements sociaux … mais, comme souvent (voyez l'évolution des radios libres et des télévisions communautaires) n'est pas la panacée qui résout la question ultime de la relation entre les citoyens et entre les citoyens et les autorités publiques.

Comme l'a relevé Michel Foucault, chez l'individu accordons plus d'importance aux trajectoires qu'aux positions ; l'essentiel n'est donc pas un assujetissement servile à des technologies mais l'intégration évolutive qu'on doit en faire dans nos politiques de communication et de débat public, en lui donnant un nécessaire cadre de valeurs. Et au moment où l'intelligence artificielle ouvre de nouvelles perspectives en la matière, l'impératif reste bien le même.

A l'échelle de ces dernières années, il est d'ailleurs singulier de relever comment l'évolution récente s'est opérée (y compris bien sûr dans nos cénacles) partant d'un engouement enthousiaste pour finalement – parfois frileusement, mais de plus en plus sûrement – replacer l'intérêt (la tendance) sur les *fake news* et la difficulté de les contrer et de légiférer en la matière, le *data mining* et l'exploitation des données personnelles avec l'introduction très fébrile du RGPD et – sur ces bases – la manipulation de nos opinions et du débat publiques.

Si tout cela est bien ainsi, et nos réunions récentes l'indiquent, nous restons persuadés que les « vraies » tendances de la communication publique sont et restent plus profondes (et, peut-être, trop peu abordées) ; en amont : l'indispensable éducation civique et aux médias, avec le soutien public à des médias indépendants et de qualité ; au centre : privilégier la relation entre le citoyen et l'état sur la base de valeurs humanistes et mériter la confiance ; toujours : garder et approfondir (parfois avec, parfois face à ces nouvelles tendances) l'engagement pour une communication de service public … et être performant.

Ce dernier impératif demande, dans un contexte de restriction budgétaire dont nos services font généralement partie des premiers touchés, une organisation dynamique et capable de faire face et/ou d'intégrer les changements, les tendances qui se dessinent … dans nos programmes d'action, nos métiers, nos formations et nos services.

C'est un *challenge* quotidien et, sans pessimisme, le pari n'est pas gagné.

Peut-être parce que dans nos métiers et « positions » la *raison* du changement est l'idéal jamais atteint …

1 A la première page du livre « Voyage au bout de la nuit » (1932).

The only thing that changes is that nothing ever changes, or very little...

By Philippe Caroyez and Vincenzo Le Voci

> *Grands changements ! qu'ils racontent.*
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As we have highlighted on several occasions, one of the many virtues of the Club of Venice is the fact that it is the only **permanent** place that enables public service communications professionals to exchange views on their activities and to learn about the activities of other government departments and institutions.

A clear example of the Club's real added value (and such examples are commonplace) is when a person responsible for a national government department introduces something "at home" that was presented by another member, or, better still: when a form of cooperation is set up between members.

Beyond our actions, we all keep a watchful eye out for trends (both positive and negative ones) in our professions and departments. Trends that are already visible or are only still emerging...

These trends can also be seen in the innovative activities presented within the Club. They are also the subject of specific research, as presented at our last meeting in Venice in November 2017, where we discussed behavioural sciences and decision-making logic (with their nudges, budges, boosts, etc.) as well as chatbots, content strategy and its design and "conversational" communication, as well as other well-known trends.

As we have said, there has always been a desire to exchange activities and points of view with other members of the Club of Venice, and this willingness is now becoming increasingly systematic.

A few years ago, our Dutch counterparts showed us the way, in a sense: they seized the opportunity of an official debate on public communication that was taking place in their country to conduct research aimed at identifying changing trends, which they made sure to integrate into their policies. Whereas others would have emphasized "citizens' expectations" (which they also did), particular emphasis was ultimately placed on the preconditions for public communication and its evolution.

Other trends that have found their way into our activities are the "all about the web" trend and the almost magical effect of (so-called) social networks, going so far as to develop the concept of a form of "digital diplomacy"... which could lead to Mc Luhan's triumph, when the medium becomes the message. Technological evolution, in this case related to means of communication, is certainly (and has always been) an obvious factor of social change... but, as is often the case (see the evolution of free radio and community television) it is not the panacea that can solve the major issue of the relationship between citizens and between citizens and public authorities.

As Michel Foucault pointed out, as individuals, we should attach greater importance to the path that has been followed than to one's point of view. It is therefore essential that we do not slavishly subjugate ourselves to technology but rather ensure its progressive integration into our communication policies and the public debate, by providing this technology with the framework of values it requires. And at a time when artificial intelligence is opening up new prospects in this area, the imperative remains the same.

Looking back at recent years, it is, moreover, remarkable to note how new technologies were embraced (of course in our cenacles), initially with great enthusiasm, but eventually - sometimes coldly, but more and more surely - the focus (the trend) is shifting to fake news and the difficulty to counter it and to legislate on the matter, to data mining and the exploitation of personal data with the feverish introduction of the GDPR and the resulting manipulation of our opinions and the public debate.

While this is all good and true, as indicated in our recent meetings, we remain convinced that the "real" trends in public communication run deeper (and are perhaps too little addressed); first: essential civic and media education, with public support for independent and quality media; in the centre: privileging the relationship between citizens and the state, on the basis of humanist values and earning trust; always: maintaining and deepening (sometimes together with, sometimes going against these new trends) the commitment to public service communication... and high performance.

This last imperative requires, given the budgetary cutbacks which often hit our departments first, a dynamic organisation able to face and/or integrate emerging changes and trends... in our action programmes, our activities, our trainings and our services.

It is a daily challenge and, without being defeatist about it, the battle is not yet won.

Perhaps because in our professions and "positions", the *reason* for change is the ideal never achieved...

1 Taken from the first page of the book "Voyage au bout de la nuit" (Journey to the End of the Night) (1932).

Club of Venice Plenary Meeting 7-8 June 2018, Vilnius (Lithuania)

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC

Meeting Venue: Vilnius Historical Town Hall
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Town_Hall,_Vilnius

The spring plenary 2018 of the Club of Venice will take place on 7 and 8 June in Vilnius in this important centenary year for restored Lithuanian statehood.

As usual, the two days of plenary will be bringing a productive and engaging exchange of views and best practice as well as extensive opportunities to strengthen and extend our professional networks.

The Vilnius agenda will address a range of priority areas within government communications and include valuable input from external communication specialists.

The participants will start revisiting the challenges associated with recovering citizens' trust and with a focus on the reconciliation of European and national agendas. This will be a timely discussion as the 2019 European elections draw closer.

The afternoon session on Thursday 7th afternoon will focus on exploring effective responses in the fast-moving landscape of hybrid threats. This will be a chance to share strategies and best practices to improve collective resilience and counter disinformation, taking stock of what has been done one year after the adoption of the London Charter.

We will also address wider issues of communications capacity and capability building, including further consideration of how to implement 'nudge theory' after useful dialogue at last year's autumn plenary.

Provisional programme

Thursday, 7 June 2018

9:00 – 09:45

Opening Session

Welcome statements - representatives of the hosting Lithuanian authorities and of the Club of Venice

- **Linas LINKEVIČIUS**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lithuania (TBC)
- **Stefano ROLANDO**, President of the Club of Venice
- (poss.) EU institutional representative

9:45 – 13:00

Plenary session

"Public communication challenges and citizens' trust"

- European elections 2019 communication campaign: how to conciliate the European and the national agenda
- Lessons learning from public opinion surveys
- Member States and Institutions: opportunities for work in partnership
- Government and institutional communication and civil society: work in progress

Moderator:

- **Jaume DUCH GUILLOT,** European Parliament Spokesperson, EP Director-General for Communication

Key Note speaker:

- **Ryan HEATH**, correspondent from "Politico"

10:30 - 10:45
coffee break

Group photo

Panellists:

- **Gaetane RICARD-NIHOUL, France**, Deputy Secretary-General for the organisation of the Consultations citoyennes in France, Ministry of European Affairs
- **Dr. Niklas WAGNER, Germany**, Head of the Steering Group Strategic Communication, Federal Foreign Office
- **Reijo KEMPPINEN**, Director-General DG Communication and Information, Council of the European Union
- **Tina ZOURNATZI**, European Commission DG Communication, Head of the Strategic Communication Unit, Directorate for Strategy and Corporate Communications
- **Mark DE BOER, Netherlands**, Director of Communication, Municipality of Utrecht
- **Anthony ZACHARZEWSKI**, Director of The Democratic Society
- **George PERLOV**, Director, Edelman - Brussels

14:15 – 18:00

Plenary session

"Hybrid threats: focus on countering disinformation, propaganda and fake news - a common endeavour"

- prevention and detection in an ever-changing landscape
- countering disinformation and fake news: cooperation in progress
- follow-up to the London Charter: where do we stand

Moderator: Rytis PAULAUSKAS, Lithuania, Director, Communications and Cultural Diplomacy Department, Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice

Key Note speaker:

- **Alex AIKEN, UK**, Executive Director of Communications, HM Government

14:45

- **Silvio GONZATO**, Director, Inter-institutional relations, Strategic communications, Legal affairs, Inspection, Internal audit and Mediation, European External Action Service (EEAS)

Break-out groups

A. Disinformation, propaganda fake news as part of a bigger picture: response needed

About: Disinformation is a phenomenon that requires addressing it on a larger scale and seeing the bigger picture. We expect participants to provide their insights about the phenomena within Europe and the work done by their respective countries or institutions

Panellists:

- **Paolo CESARINI**, Head of the Media Convergence and Social Media Unit, European Commission DG C'NECT
- **Yevhen FEDCHENKO**. Executive Editor, StopFake, Director at Mohyla School of Journalism in Kyiv
- **Dmitry TEPERIK**, Chief Executive, International Centre for Defence and Security, Estonia
- **Ana María RODRÍGUEZ PEREZ, Spain**, Director-General, Comunicación e Información Diplomática, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Marjorie VAN DEN BROEKE**, European Parliament, Head of the Spokesperson Unit

B. Stay fit, stay active: tips to raise societal resilience in a challenging diplomacy and digital landscape

About: The best initiatives come often bottom–up. How to raise the awareness among the public, how to engage the society? and do the efforts pay back? Tips and tricks from societal resilience experts

Panellists:

- **Romanas JUDINAS**, Advisor to Risk Management and Crisis Prevention Bureau at the Chancellery of the Government of **Lithuania**
- **Dr. Corneliu BJOLA,** Head of Digital Diplomacy Group, Oxford University
- **Pavel LICKIEWICZ**, Deputy Director of the Government Press Office, **Poland**
- one representative from **Italy** (tbc)
- **Elpida-Melpomeni CHLIMINTZA**, Seconded National Expert, Council of the European Union, Civil Protection Unit

C. What works: effective ways to monitor, deconstruct and counter fake news, propaganda

About: Open sources are flooded with disinformation. Experts will demonstrate on how to construct a bigger picture from bits of seemingly random disinformation and how even smallest pieces of information can reveal the truth, if you know how to analyse it

Panellists:

- one representative from **Sweden**
- **Tomas TAUGINTAS, Lithuanian** Armed Forces, Head of the Monitoring Centre
- **Vesa HÄKKINEN, Finland,** Director, Current Affairs Communications, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Chris RILEY,** Head of **NATO** Headquarters Stratcom (tbc)
- **Silvio GONZATO,** Director, European External Action Service

17:00 – 17:45 ***Break-out groups leaders' report on discussion (+ Q&A)***

17:45 - 18:00 ***Conclusion and adoption of the Vilnius' Charter on resilience***

20:30 **Reception at the Palace of Grand Dukes. Presentation of Lithuanian Grand Duchy history and official gala dinner hosted by Lithuanian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Darius Skusevičius and European Commission Head of Representation in Lithuania Arnoldas Pranckevičius**

Key Note speaker: Mike HANLEY, Head of Digital Communications, World Economic Forum

	Friday, 8 June 2018
9:00 – 12:30	**Plenary session/Round table** **"Capacity/Capability Building and implementation of Nudge theories"** ▪ shaping professionalism: work in progress ▪ communication services: technology and the human factor ▪ empowerment and effectiveness: pooling resources ▪ measurability and sustainability **Moderator:** ▪ **Vincenzo LE VOCI**, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice **Key Note speaker:** ▪ **Ruth KENNEDY**, Founder Director of 'ThePublicOffice' *10:30 - 10:45* **Panellists**: ▪ **Sean LARKINS**, Director, Consulting and Capability, WPP Government and Public Sector Practice ▪ **Erik DEN HOEDT, Netherlands**, Director, Public Information and Communication, Ministry of General Affairs - member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice and **Robert WESTER, Netherlands**, Head of sector government, Berenschot Advisors ▪ **Riccardo VIALE, Italy**, Professor of behavioral sciences and decision making, University of Milano Bicocca and Secretary-General of the Herbert Simon Society ▪ **Igor BLAHUŠIAK, Czech Republic**, Director of the European Affairs Communication Department, Office of the Government

12:30 – 13:00	**Closing Session**
	
	▪ Reflections on the issues emerged during the plenary meeting
	▪ Planning for 2018-2019, with focus on:
	  * Greece seminar on migration (September 2018) (tbc)
	  * Venice autumn plenary (22-23 November 2018)
	  * London seminar on stratcom (December 2018) (tbc)

Outcome of the Club of Venice plenary meeting held in Venice on 23 and 24 November 2017

The Club of Venice (informal network of the EU MS' and institutions' communication directors and senior communication specialists) held its **autumn plenary in Venice on 23 and 24 November 2017**.

Attendance: 85 participants from 24 countries, EU institutions and bodies, and external communication specialists.

The meeting focused on the following topics:

1. "European communication challenges: Rebuilding citizens' confidence in the EU"

- the role of Member States and institutions
- overcoming barriers and divides: opportunities for work in partnership
- government and institutional communication and civil society

Objectives

- To identify major factors/developments undermining citizens' confidence in the EU and discuss communication strategies to address these problems
- To exchange views on the new challenges for public communicators in the light of the digital innovation, learning lessons from interactive web platforms that could facilitate the relaunch/revamp of the European debate
- To glean knowledge of the EP's freshly adopted communication strategy in view of the European elections in 2019 and start discussing practical steps for the timely reinforcement of the inter-institutional cooperation in this regard
- To table ideas for new partnership instruments and thereby enhance cooperation among Member States' communication authorities and between EU institutions and MS; discuss opportunities for reinforcing cooperation with civil society.

The debate, moderated by Claus HÖRR, Director for Press and Information in the Austrian State Chancellery, focused on how to re-build citizens' trust in the EU. It was opened by a key-note delivered by Jaume DUCH GUILLOT, European Parliament Spokesperson and Director-General of EP's Communication, who outlined the main principles and objectives of the communication strategy for the 2019 European elections, presented in the EP's plenary two weeks before the Club plenary.

The aim of the awareness-raising information campaign is to alert citizens of what is at stake, bearing in mind the need to:

1. run a pro-European campaign (we cannot be "neutral") to defend and propagate the European democratic values;
2. well identify the target audience (focus on youth and strong opinion makers);
3. carry out an overarching campaign based on a decentralized approach and tailored to the national contexts;
4. find solid partners which facilitate outreach and interaction.

In Jaume's view, credibility, ownership and partnership will be the core elements. During the campaign public communicators should not refrain from tackling the most political sensitive issues (such as migration) in public.

Panellists reported on governmental and institutional best practice and exchanged their views on the following issues:

- What are today's main challenges undermining confidence of citizens in the EU and how should they be tackled by public communication
- What is the EU's and the MS' capacity to counteract growing nationalism and euro-scepticism through adequate narratives
- Concrete measures taken by individual countries and/or institutions to fight populism, nationalism/separatism and euro-scepticism
- How to reinforce MS' cooperation with the EP and the other EU institutions in the two years that will lead us to the next European elections

Main issues emerged

- When approaching citizens, the EU should *stay transparent*. This is fundamental if we consider the different national sensibilities, which depend on cultural, historical and local developments (Estonian Presidency). There is a need to offer a truly "balancing narrative", to respect freedom of press and opinion and to build a better understanding not only of institutional issues but also of practical issues that have a common concern. Civic initiatives should be multiplied (the German Federal Agency of Civic Education was mentioned as an example).
- Communicators should *get more engaged towards citizens* and not hesitate to discuss policy matters. The decentralised dialogue should be pursued and expanded. European Dialogues and Democratic Conventions should be further promoted and partnerships with think tanks and civil society organisations should be reinforced.
- *Communication remains a primary strategic lever*. Debates with voices of criticism are needed. All the initiatives to communicate Europe in line with Bratislava and Rome Declara-

tions, as well as the celebration of the 60th Anniversary of the Treaties, have provided a fertile ground for debate and contributed to raise citizens' awareness of Europe. **Italy** has targeted young audiences and carried out an integrated information campaign conveying simple and clear messages through social media and traditional TV channels. An internal debate in the form of a transversal campaign has been launched in all public administrations and this dynamic and transparent model could be exported to other Member States.

- *Disinformation and fake news continue to have a destabilizing effect on public opinion.* The **EEAS** (mandated by the European Council) and its institutional and governmental partners is strongly committed to raising awareness of these phenomena, and their consequences and threats on the credibility of the institutions, public authorities and mainstream media. EU support to EEAS' StratCom plans and campaigns is increasing.
- According to academic contributions, strategic deficits and unfortunate communication approaches must share the responsibility for unsuccessful outcomes and increased distrust. Reasons include:
  * interaction between the EU and media are showing clear margins of improvement;
  * the UK referendum campaign forgot to go back to basics and was only focused on market and migration;
  * the reflection on Russia's influence and the information crisis on Ukraine hasn't yet convinced all partners to internationalise the issue. Hence, the lack of a unified EU's vision and the rise of a "credibility war" requires a debunking of disinformation campaigns.
- *Joint projects to better analyse, conceptualise and visualise EU's cohesion and cooperation* such as the EU Coalition Explorer and EU Cohesion Monitor (implemented by the Mercator Foundation and the European Council of Foreign Relations through the "Rethink: Europe" initiative) can exponentially enhance the awareness-raising process, help overcome fears and facilitate the reflection to reframe the context. This analysis based on groupings/clusters of EU member states' according to their "attitudes" (Founding Six, Big Six, Affluent Seven, Southern Seven, Visegrád Four) can help Member States inspect analogies and inspect potential common denominators on which to [re-]build communication on Europe.
- The same goes for other valuable monitoring sources and studies, such as the Council of Europe's commissioned study "Information Disorder: Toward an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy Making" (published in September 2017).

Future Orientations

A variety of actions are in the pipeline, their implementations depending on MS' individual capacities:

- The institutions' *work in partnership* with Member States and civil society is crucial. The Brexit horizon is a wake-up call that conveys a clear message: there is a need to go back to basics and work together. 2018 will be the 70th Anniversary of the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the EU will carry out a strong communication campaign as it did last year with last year massive campaign to promote children's rights. According to the EEAS, the European Foreign and Security Policy can be better addressed through joint efforts. Two StratCom seminars will be organised next year to enhance its capabilities to counteract disinformation through **new Task Forces** focusing on the Western Balkans and the Arab World.
- The EU institutions are endeavouring to *multiply their efforts for a more effective communication on Europe* (the EP looks forward to involving institutional and governmental partners and civil society in the implementation of its communication strategy for the 2019 elections; the Commission envisages applying its corporate approach availing of its regional delegations' structure). The same goes for the EU consultative bodies through their locally developed network and their professional experience.
- The *European Year 2018* on cultural heritage (presented by the Commission DG EAC), promoted by the European Parliament and with the strong support of civil society and the cultural world, will be one of the multipliers. The information campaign will convey a positive message of safeguard of the past and investment in the future, the cultural heritage belonging not to experts and elites but to citizens and the communities as the expression of European identities and cultural diversity. Cooperation of major internet players such as Google and YouTube is envisaged.
- There is a need to *increasingly develop cross-border cooperation in communicating Europe* by MS and/or other non-EU neighbour countries (engaged or not yet engaged in the accession process). Likewise, European institutions, EU agencies and other international organizations should continue to promote joint initiatives aiming at sharing values, resolving divides and overcoming stereotyped barriers, involving national authorities at all level (national, regional and local). All communication professionals should work hand in hand with policy teams to build relevant information on concrete priorities, refraining from delivering incomplete, unstructured or inaccurate information.
- The Club will pursue discussions on this topic in its future meetings and envisages to do so in conjunction with the implementation of the communication strategy in view of the **European elections 2019**.

*The Steering Group and the editorial team of "***Convergences***" presented and circulated the edition n° 10 of the review, that contains detailed outcomes of the Club of Venice meetings (plenaries and seminars) held in 2016 and 2017, as well as rich contributions on core topics (the role of governmental communication academies, citizens' engagement and trust, relaunching the European institutional communication, the London Charter, contrast to euro-scepticism, the refugee and migration crisis, modern media guiding principles, the "social media revolution", behaviour changes and soft power developments) and events (SEECOM, EuroPCom, Cap'Com).*

Italy's State Secretary **Sandro Gozi**, praising the Club of Venice commitment to fostering the debate among public communication professionals, recalled today's main challenges for Europe (the migration crisis, radicalisation, terrorism, nationalism/populism and illiberal democracies, social tensions and overall scepticism). He also underlined that it is crucial to relaunch democratic values and rediscover the good parameters to strengthen dialogue with citizens. This must be a common endeavour, where member states and institutions must play a joint proactive role giving back to their citizens hopes and opportunities for building a better future.

In Sandro Gozi's view, the slogan "Let's take back control" does not mean to abandon the EU but to work together to change Europe for better. He pointed out that the future must be based on common European policies and on a continuous contrast to the crises acting at the origin of each phenomenon, safeguarding and consolidating fundamental rights and values and the rule of law. An increased attention to the social dimension of Europe, together with concrete, rapid and transparent decisions, in line with citizens' choices and expectations, and more trans-national cooperation will make the difference.

2. "The impact of the new media and communication landscape on the public communicator's profession and on ethics"

- follow-up to the London Charter
- threats and opportunities

Objectives

- To *take stock of measures* taken by governmental and institutional communicators in line with the London Charter adopted at the CoV StratCom seminar in London on 17 March 2017
- *To share suggestions* on:
  * how a modern organizational approach (major reforms of media and communication systems, integrated structures, integrated plans, checklists, etc.) could help improve efficiency adapting to the increasingly evolving new media landscape
  * possible synergies at trans-national level and between governments and institutions to maximize benefit opportunities from the digital society
- To *analyse the impact of fake news* on public opinion (case studies/recent events). Explore possibilities for new synergies in the development of communication instruments aiming at promptly detecting disinformation and adopting the appropriate neutralising measures
- To *reflect on how to safeguard ethical principles*:
  * fulfilling the public communicator's tasks as honest broker and interface between the political authorities and citizens
  * establishing agreed codes of conduct/memoranda/professional guidelines/partnership agreements with media representatives
  * supporting and protecting democratic medias against hybrid threats, drifts in the respect of media and impartiality, and other hampering influences.

In its introductory key-note, **Anthony ZACHARZEWSKI**, Director of The Democratic Society recalled the principles enshrined in the London Charter adopted by the Club at the end of its Stratcom seminar on 17 March 2017.

Anthony underlined that communicators share the crucial task to promote and safeguard democratic values, that can only be honoured by protecting and defending civic spaces, and helping develop the cooperative spirit to enable the institutions to enhance openness. Public authorities – he said - should refrain from acting in a fragmented way and join the Open Government Partnership approach and cooperate with civil society in a meaningful and transparent dialogue (following the example of France's announced democratic conventions and expanding local connections). The system must be accessible, fully representative, and cannot be perceived to include "dark matter" (every part of the access must be open and visible) but must drive people to a comfortable area for manoeuvring which will make the difference.

We need to "give people the tools to challenge" and do it fast, pointed out Anthony, recalling Scotland's motto "to be a civil servant means to be always searching for a new way to communicate". Cooperation with social networks can help create new spaces to enhance and expand democratic dialogue with citizens.

Erik DEN HOEDT, Director of Communication and Public Information of the Netherlands Government and moderator of the panel, agreed that cohesion is one of the challenging elements in the EU. Erik referred to the governments' different approach in coping with the new media framework and with the speedy technological innovation while keeping ethics as the core reference. He welcomed this session as a good opportunity to learn lessons from individual experiences and have an insight of public communication nuances in this regard.

The exchange of feedback covered the following aspects:

- the importance of *setting up clear parameters*, scope and objectives (**Fredrik NORDIN** referred to Sweden mobilisation to contrast fake news and propaganda, mobilising all the country's embassies, disseminating social media guidance, drawing inspiration from the CoE's report on Information Disorder, safeguarding freedom of press and stressing the need to stand up for values)
- suggestions *to foster use of all technological instruments to expand outreach* and strengthen citizens' engagement ("*do more and better*")

- the *difficulty to organise objective, neutral and balanced narratives* to counter threats to the freedom of press and disinformation that could have a strong impact on the countries' reputation, particularly in case of internal political conflicts (feedback from **Paul AZZOPARDI and Ana RODRÍGUEZ PEREZ**)
- the *difficulty to communicate to polarized audiences* in a heavily politicized environment (**Alexios GEORGIADES** informed on the evolution of media landscape in Greece during the recovery from the economic and migration crises and on the creation of an electronic media business register)
- the need for:
  * *clear analyses of today's trends* in public communication. **Arlin BAGDAT** recalled Belgium authorities' attention to what's new: big data, artificial intelligence, new design theories and techniques, virtual reality, as well as to the volatile news share, to the increasing negative impact of disinformation and fake news and to the quick information spread prevailing over content quality
  * *investing more resources in digital technology*. The new landscape requires a new level of monitoring and high quality performances. Social media has enormously changed expectations and new skills and capacities are required. Complex topics require new media to break down the subject adequately (**Tina URM** on the legacy of the digital summit of 29 September 2017 and the e-government ministerial Conference in Tallinn on 6 October 2017 and on the ongoing development of e-services in Estonia)
  * *strengthening cooperation between the European institutions* and Member States in countering fake news dissemination (such as in times of management of crisis such as migration or during national elections), focusing on prevention and prompt rebuttals (**Silvio GONZATO** welcomed the increased resources allocated from the EU to the EEAS in this regard)
- work in progress on different fronts:
  * **Marco INCERTI** referred to the *mobilisation of the European International University* (with its Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom (CMPF) and its School of Trans-national Governance) as well as to the newly established Observatory of Public Attitudes to Migration (OPAM) (part of the Migration Policy Centre within the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies), and stressed the need for structured training
  * **Giuseppe ZAFFUTO** outlined, among others, the Council of Europe's commitment to *spotting disinformation sources, cyber-threats and hate speech*, its engagement in young people awareness raising and its platform to train journalists (project developed jointly with ten media players) and the upcoming celebrations of the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly (2018) and of the Treaty of London establishing the CoE (2019)
  * **Verena NOWOTNY** (Gaisberg) focused on the dimension and speed of information circulating on line, on the loss of the human factors, on the rise of emotional aggression and on the new interactive scenario in which "readers are also writers", with an enormous *impact on ethics' safeguard*. Against this framework, communication quality needs to change otherwise new trustworthy information sources must be identified to present the facts. In Verena's view, a shift in attitude must be found to get more participation from citizens.
  * **Christian SPAHR** (KAS) updated the Club on the media independence low rate and increased media politicization in the Balkans. *Social media is the ideal ground for stronger influence of populism and anti-EU propaganda*. It is therefore crucial for the EU and all other democratic forces to support free press and communication, debunk fake news, implement good projects in partnership with NATO and its Stratcom Centres of Excellence, disseminate clear and objective information to better explain what the EU does for the region, invest in training and education

Conclusions/Future Orientations

- *Increased mobilisation to*:
  * *identify reliable strategic partners* and define the most appropriate communication channels
  * disseminate *meaningful content which reflects common values*, to work together sharing information and resources and to monitor information spread through the internet and in particular through the social media
  * *preserve the ethical principles of public communication and integrity*, combined with high degree of competence and professionalism (**Alex AIKEN** referred to "*Truth Well Told*" and to the clear, competent and credible communication approach of the Estonian Presidency of the Council)
- *Further work in synergy*, increasing the exchange of feedback and seeking new forms of collaboration at trans-national level and with the EU institutions, but in particular strengthening ties with civil society and the young generation
- *Invest in training, pooling existing resources* to this end as much as possible
- *A reporting exercise* to be carried out in early spring 2018, one year after the Club adoption of the London Charter, to ascertain progress made in the implementation of its principles
- Participants agreed to organize a new session on this issue on the occasion of the next plenary meeting in Vilnius (June 2018) as well as a new thematic seminar (venue to be decided).

3. Towards 2019: citizen outreach on the future of Europe

This session aimed to *confirm the institutions' commitment to relaunch and revamp cooperation* in improving citizens' outreach in view of the future challenges for the EU.

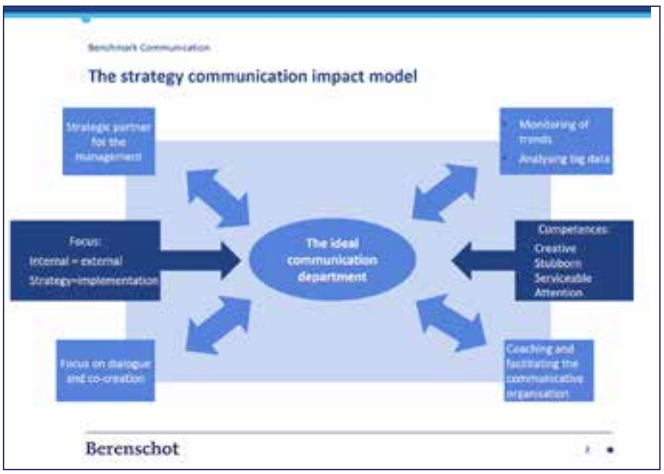
- **Vito BORRELLI,** Deputy Head of the European Commission Representation in Italy, referred to the impulse given by the White Paper on the future of Europe and its four thematic reflection papers and stressed the importance to *communicate objectively on today's EU's political challenges*. He highlighted the potential added value of reinforced citizens' dialogues and of the democratic conventions initiative proposed by France. He stressed the need to beware of complacency and paternalistic approaches and urged the key players to align communication to politics, finding alternative solutions to communicate trustworthily, always driven by ethics.
- **Tanja RUDOLF**, Advisor to the Director-General of the European Parliament DG Communication, outlined the *increasing commitment on line and interaction on the social media*, which goes hand in hand with its enriched segmentation process to identify the audiences' profiles. EP will deliver less on "institutional" and more on human rights, will give the floor to local audiences and stimulate citizens' participation in the debate. Tanja also referred to the optimisation of its visitors' service (Parlamentarium, The House of European History).
- **Christophe ROUILLON,** Member of the Committee of the Regions, Rapporteur on Communication, stressed the need to continue to engage in the European debate on how to *contrast growing extremism and worrying drifts emerging from recent national elections.* Christophe underlined that the safeguard of the EU's principles and values is an undisputable priority for President Macron's agenda and welcomed the Club of Venice and EuroPCom intention to pursue the debate on this subject. He finally invited the participants to draw attention to the specificity of the audiences and to the need for innovative software and individual skills development.

4. Capacity/Capability Building and Behavioural Developments

- *The Nudge concept:* competence, organisational skills, empowerment and effectiveness
- *shaping professionalism*: the ongoing transformation of public services
- *lessons learning from public opinion trends*
- *on line technology and training*

Objectives

- To *analyse necessary evolutions* in public sector communications in light of today's political and societal challenges and share solutions that work
- To *illustrate examples of good use of behavioural principles*, such as NUDGE and similar theories, and their implementation within international organisations and national administrations
- To *exchange best practices and concrete examples* of use of how behavioural change is being fostered or could be encouraged and boosted
- To *present ideal training models* to shape professional standards and skills to the ongoing necessary transformation of public services, to respond more effectively to citizens' expectations
- To *address ways public organizations exploit on line technologies* to better analyse ongoing interactive approaches in communication and seek citizens' and civil society's higher involvement and interaction



Discussion[1]

This panel was moderated by **Laure VAN HAUWAERT,** Managing Director of the "European Institutions" Department of WPP-Government and Public Sector Practice (Belgium).

In his key-note, **Professor Riccardo VIALE,** Professor of behavioral sciences and decision making at Milano Bicocca University described the different theories (NUDGE, BUDGE, BRAN, BOOST and Behavioural Insights) and *the need for effective tools to adapt work strategies taking due account of ethical, political and economic constraints*.

Professor Viale referred to *public administrations' lack of capacity to manage the behavioural effects of information* and to the fact that "human beings' are used to reason with natural sequences much better than with percentages" (hence, the impact of the language of "numbers" on people's perception). Moreover, referring to three study cases (Aquila earthquake witch-hunt; UK echoes on a killer contraceptive pill and over-reaction to swine flu spread), he stressed the need for

- *behavioural organization to cope with media irrationalities* and avoiding manipulation from framing effects
- *drawing inspiration from positive social norms* and social recognitions and achievements
- *de-biasing actions and for educational investments in behavioural literacy* and development of decision-making skills to deal with risks and uncertainties
- *promoting an integrated approach* based on three core behavioural tools: education, information and choice of the appropriate architecture.

Feedback sharing - main issues emerged from the session - successful operating models and experiences

- **Pinky BADHAN** spoke on the four pillars of the UK government communication (*strategic planning, internal communication, media & campaigns and strategic engagement*). She focused on setting clear organisation and communication

1 The Club of Venice aimed to follow-up to discussions held in Venice in November 2016 and in Malta in May 2017 on the future capacity/capability building strategies of the public sector, learning lessons from the "Leaders' Report" presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos in early 2017

objectives; developing professional standards; fostering an internal culture of professionalism among all staff playing communication roles across the government; learning about campaign framework and tools; inspiring, confident and empowering leadership; evaluation plans; and the OASIS approach

- **Markus KANERVA**, senior specialist in the Finnish Government Policy Analysis Unit ("Experimental Finland" Team) shared some practical examples of how *citizens' may be encouraged to turn ideas into concrete experiments*, regrouping those who have skills or funds to realise those ideas. This NUDGE-related culture creates opportunities for co-creating social innovations, distributing best lessons learned and, for example, combining crowdfunding and public funding
- **Tina Israelsson** from the Communication Division of the Swedish government offices referred to *digital communication training* organised in the 2nd semester 2018 for the governmental staff (Sweden has a consolidated experience in this field, on which it contributed to the Club in The Hague in spring 2015 in the context of e-diplomacy)
- **Robert WESTER,** from Netherlands, Head of sector government in Berenschot Advisors, focused on the growing importance of *new ways of organizing benchmark communication in a rapidly evolving scenario* where the democratization of communication and the digitization have totally redesigned the public landscape. The increased active citizenship and the multiplication of communication channels and reporting sources have generated a stronger demand for credible information, with reputation constantly being under the spotlight. Robert underlined that an ideal communication department should rely on transparency, authenticity and integrity since communication remains one of the main assets of an organisation. He highlighted the concept of pooling communication advisors and introducing the practice of "strategic labs" that should be in the heart of each organization's strategy.
- **David WATSON,** Head of Marketing, Public Health England focused on *the internal and external factors that can influence behaviours*. In line with Professor Viale, he highlighted the importance of the messages' architecture, the heuristic approach, hyperbolic messages and overall impact of images. His case study concerned a successful strategic approach developed for a "prototype willingness model" applied to teenage risky behaviour (a peer-to-peer campaign implemented across multiple formats, supported in schools).
- **George PERLOV,** Director of Edelman-Brussels, underlined that, *to inspire behaviour change, organizations need to go beyond traditional communications and engage in innovative projects*. George's study case was a successful safety campaign on cycling in the cities. The professional approach of governmental authorities and possible cooperation with skilled and competent external communication experts can make the difference, bearing in mind that message content, motivation, clear objectives, empowerment and engagement are all essential ingredients to do well in this field.

Conclusions/Future Orientations/Short and Mid-Term Deliverables

- Shared views about:
  * investing in digital as a must
  * investing in the utilisation of big data to understand audiences
  * shaping messages that build trust and allow engagement
  * collaborating across services as a norm
  * co-creativity as the best way to use the Nudging approach
  * drawing outcome-focused evaluation plans (and keeping them up to date)
  * sharing insight, including criticism. This leads to better internal cooperation, coordination and team spirit as well as to better understanding of audiences;
  * building external and internal trust and allow and encourage engagement
  * developing a behavioural change culture designing a functional framework to help broaden the communicators' range of skills
  * the need for utmost transparency levels in staff and audiences' inclusiveness
  * continuing to embrace new technology, but wisely, to prevent it from creating turbulences and adverse effects
- The Club looks forward to the adoption at its next plenary in Vilnius of a Charter outlining the core principles of capacity/capability building - in line with the approach followed at its StratCom seminar in London in March 2017.

5. Communication on the management of the refugees' and migration crisis and policy implementation: the impact on public opinion

The objective of the concluding session of the plenary was to take stock of progress in this field in the last six months, where the Club was mobilized on the ground and played a proactive role in the awareness-raising and information sharing through its seminars in Malta (May 2017) and Greece (September 2017).

The panellists represented governmental authorities and international organisations directly involved in the crisis scenario and fully committed to operating together for its management.

- **Julien SIMON,** Regional Coordinator for the Mediterranean at the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD, funded by the EU), referred to *the potential impact of public perception on the effectiveness of the migration management and on the development of effective policies*. Moreover, he warned against risks arising from inadequate

analyses and evaluations, inappropriate use of terminology (such as migration vs/irregular migration), absence of positive imagery and lack of consideration for ethics. Finally, Julien announced several initiatives of the ICMPD, among which three studies (migration media reporting; public attitudes on migration; the role of policy-makers and communicators), a "Migration Media Hub" (a digital portal on migration for journalists) and the pursuit of the Migration Media Award to encourage young professional journalists covering migration

- **Ewa MONCURE**, Spokesperson of FRONTEX, welcomed the *increased attention paid by the Club of Venice to the migration file* and the coverage of this topic in the Club review "Convergences". Ewa also recalled the moving contribution of Doctor Bartolo from Lampedusa (through a dramatic imagery set) to the seminar held last spring in Malta and stressed the need for focusing on trends rather than on single events. Furthermore, she referred to the increased Frontex responsibilities, to its rich data base and to the media training programme organized for its officers and collaborators deployed on the ground.
- **Melissa JULIAN,** Regional communications coordinator and policy outreach officer at the *International Organization for Migration (***IOM***), outlined its broad range of activities* (direct involvement in the assistance to migrants, production of video-testimonials on EU relocations, cooperation in drafting the "global compact" on migration, assistance/protection of unaccompanied minors, constant research of skilful and qualified operators)
- **Anis CASSAR**, Press and Communication Officer at the European Asylum Support Office (**EASO**) focused on the *EASO's social media monitoring programme* (initiative recently taken over from the UNHCR), to its weekly reports with input from asylum officials and policy makers and its value for policy communicators and to the multi-lingual skills of its staff. Anis also warned against the exposure to de-legitimization of fragmented and incoherent information campaigns and the increasingly innovative communication means deployed by the smugglers
- **Alexios GEORGIADES**, Head of the Directorate for International Communication in the General Secretariat for Media and Communication (Greece Ministry for Digital Policy, Telecommunications and Media) thanked the Club of Venice for its proactive involvement in this file and its collaboration in the organization of the seminar/study trip to Athens-Thebes-Livadia-Thessaloniki in September 2017, on which he showed a video clip. He outlined the *"Open media" policy implemented in his country which addresses the European and International public*, the Greek citizens and the refugees and migrants and recalled the recent establishment of the Secretariat for Crisis Management Communication.

Future Orientations

- *continue to develop more effective governmental and institutional communication strategies on the refugee and migration crisis management*, enhancing cooperation in this field at intergovernmental level and with the EU institutions and seeking further synergies
- *strengthen cooperation with international organisations and civil society* in information sharing, monitoring public opinion evolution, analysing effectiveness of policies' communication strategies
- *contribute to the promotion of reliable information sources* and fruitful use of thematic studies

Next deadlines

Rytis PAULAUSKAS, Director at the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and new member of the Steering Group of the Club of Venice, and Vincenzo LE VOCI, Secretary-General of the Club, announced that the *next plenary meeting will take place in Vilnius on 7 and 8 June 2018. The communication strategy for the European elections 2019 and countering disinformation and fake news will be two of the key topics on the agenda.*

The Club will also organise a new thematic seminar in September 2018 on a crisis communication topic.

Dominique MEGARD, President of Cap'Com (French public and territorial communication network) announced the annual conference of the 30th Anniversary of *Cap'Com foreseen in Lyon on 4, 5 and 6 December 2018.* Communication directors from all over Europe will be attending the event, which will be a *great opportunity to strengthen networking and seek synergies*. The Club will be invited to take part in the different thematic panels and round tables.

Club of Venice
Plenary Session
Venice, 23-24 November 2017

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Ten lessons from the history of Governmer

By Alex Aiken

The UK Government Communication Service (GCS) and its processors have developed significantly over the past 100 years. From supporting the war only to a core lever of government, not only communication generally but also the GCS has changed dramatically.

The purpose of the GCS is wide ranging, delivering world-class public service communications that support the governments' priorities, enable the efficient and effective operation of public services, and improve and save people's lives.

We have learned various lessons on how we can be the best public communicators we can be, which we would like to share with the Club of Venice informal European Communicator network.

1. Trust is built on truth not propaganda

Basil Clarke was the first to really understand the importance of building trust through honesty. There had been no significant opposition to the war in Britain before the 1918 armistice but that changed in subsequent years when stories of German atrocities were shown to be embellished. It was a lesson that Clarke was determined to press home in the early 1920s when Ireland was in the throes of an armed rebellion against British rule. "Public and press opinion alike are more easily and more quickly influenced by news than by views." Clarke's approach stressed the importance of presenting news truthfully, albeit with greater emphasis on facts that supported the case. He saw credibility as the PR practitioner's most valuable tool. When he set up what was perhaps Britain's first professional PR agency in 1924, Editorial Service, he launched the first code of ethics which emphasised truthfulness and disclosure about who the actual client was when attempting to win coverage. In the years that followed these lessons were occasionally forgotten. In the Second World War the Ministry of Information's campaigns were seen as patronising. The first use of qualitative research showed that people wanted the Government to trust them with information – good and bad. In Churchill's own phrase, once the British people felt they were not being lied to or patronised, they showed every sign of being willing to "keep buggering on".

2. The need for science in campaigns

In the 1920s the newly-born Empire Marketing Board was the first to use multi-channel campaigns with audience segmentation to achieve the outcomes set. When Britain's economic health, largely borne out of trade to the Empire, came under threat in the 1920s from the new commercial power of the United States and Japan, the Government resisted the temptation to rely wholly on tariffs and relied on effective communications instead. One innovation was the EMB's Christmas pudding-based campaigns showing how the chef to King George V incorporated ingredients from across the Empire, ranging from cloves from Zanzibar to rum from Jamaica. One "Buy British" campaign involved posters in 450 cities and towns. The launch of the EMB saw, for the first time in peacetime, communications elevated into a vital tool of policy. The Empire Marketing Board was the first to understand that targeting different audiences with tailored messaging increased effectiveness. Women were specifically targeted as key consumers via the BBC through a series of "Household talks". Children were targeted through schools. Sir Stephen Tallents, overseer of the EMB, told a parliamentary committee that while butter consumption increased by 9% between 1929 and 1932, butter imported through Empire had increased by 50%. Tallents was the father of "nation branding" and laid the groundwork for the GREAT campaign.

3. Communications has to be ahead of the curve on technology

Sir Stephen Tallents understood the role technology had to play in reaching audiences. In his own words, he saw "Film, radio, poster and exhibition as the sextant and compass which would maneuver citizenship over the new democratic distances". It was a philosophy which inspired Whitehall to grapple with the arrival of the internet as an everyday tool of communication seven decades later. The first UK government website was wholly unofficial and the brainchild of a young Treasury economist, Owen Barder, who took the idea of putting the 1993 Budget up on the embryonic web to HMT's management board where it was enthusiastically backed by the Permanent Secretary, Terry Burns. In a blog remembering the episode, Barder wrote: "We got the text of the budget documents as ASCII files on 3.5" disks from the typesetters, and I worked through the night, using a basic text editor to put the HTML codes into the files manually. I finished marking up the pages about an hour before the Budget Speech began; and we went live as the Chancellor of the Exchequer sat down at the end of his speech." So novel was this move that Barder got to choose HMT's domain name - *hm-treasury.gov.uk* - thereby creating a precedent still reflected by "gov.uk" today. Among the Phillis Review's recommendations in 2004 was the creation of a single government website rather than the free-for-all which was to characterise most online government communications and citizen-facing services until gov.uk's arrival eight years later in 2012.

4. Strong internal communications helps external aims

Tallents realised the importance of strong internal communications in helping to achieve wider communications aims. The Royal Mail, often bedevilled in the1930s by bad industrial relations, was used in 1936 to boost the Union shortly after the for-

mation of the SNP. Tallents sought artistic inspiration by commissioning a film, *Night Mail*, which chronicled the journey of the mail express between England and Scotland as an emotive attempt to send a message of union between the two countries.

> *This is the Night Mail crossing the border,*
> *Bringing the cheque and the postal order,*
> *Letters for the rich, letters for the poor,*
> *The shop at the corner and the girl next door*

Yet Tallents realised the power of staff as ambassadors and the importance of strong internal communications to inspire them. His golden touch included the creation of the *Post Office Magazine*. The quality of the publication was so high it became a huge public success with an external circulation of over 300,000.

5. Communications leadership is essential

The onset of World War II illustrated the need for communications leadership to help shape strategy. As mass communications were becoming ever more pervasive thanks to radio and ever growing cinema audiences, a shadow "Ministry of Information" was created with Tallents himself appointed Director-General designate. Yet as the war came closer, Tallents found his hands tied by career civil servants with no communications background. This was to have catastrophic consequences. From the start of the war, the MOI was to have five main broad functions: Release of official news; Censorship of films, press and BBC; Maintenance of morale; Conduct of publicity campaigns for other departments and propaganda to other countries. The last of these was jettisoned quickly. Some of the MOI campaigns also drew public scorn. One poster which had the message "Your courage, Your cheerfulness, Your resolution will bring us victory" was seen as patronising and created a sense of "them and us" between Government and citizens. The mistake was repeated in 1946-47 when the Central Office of Information was born. A committee of senior civil servants – most of them not communications professionals – launched a "Prosperity Campaign" designed to persuade that post-war sacrifices were essential through the deployment of indigestible key messages in long essays. It finally took communications professionals to point out that presentation is everything, boiling down the objectives to messages as simple as "Export or Die".

6. Insight has to shape strategy

What saved the MOI from irrelevance during World War II was the use of insight to help shape future strategy. The pioneer in this area was Mass Observation – founded by the anthropologist Tom Harrison – which was the first to use qualitative techniques by using "observers" across the country to compile diaries based on conversations with friends, neighbours and workmates. This barometer of national mood was part of the basis for forming the MOI's Home Intelligence Division. Initially seen as controversial, it was used to gauge the effectiveness of Government campaigns on subjects as varied as air raid precautions to warnings about venereal disease. Germany had a similar system in place, run via local Nazi Party offices, but in a totalitarian state the population did not provide honest answers. By 1941 the insight showed that MOI exhortations were having no effect. What mattered was the sense that the government trusted the people to be honest with them about how the war - one which the overwhelming majority of the population felt Britain had no choice but to prosecute - was progressing. As one famous Home Intelligence report from 1941 stated, the British people "showed a very degree of common sense". There was little need for propaganda

7. Media control rarely works

Attempts to control the media have often backfired. During the second world war police officers were deployed, under Home Office instruction, to seize newspapers once the presses started to roll on a story that British forces were engaged in France in an offensive against Germany, initially sanctioned by the Ministry of Information only for the War Office to overturn. Roadblocks were erected in Fleet Street and newspaper trains were stopped en route from London. The situation was widely described as one of 'chaos' and 'complete confusion'. The ministry's reputation further suffered from its heavy-handed censorship of air-raid casualties and the bungled announcement of Rudolf Hess's flight to Britain in May 1941. During the Falklands conflict relations between correspondents and their MOD handlers were so bad that Michael Nicholson of ITN prefaced his bulletins with statements that they were being censored. Journalists occasionally found ways to get round the rules. This included BBC Correspondent Brian Hanrahan's famous line: "I'm not allowed to say how many planes joined the raid, but I counted them all out and I counted them all back." Concerns inside the war cabinet over the possibility that relations with the press would turn so toxic that they affect the success of the operation eventually led to the return of background briefings with defence correspondents. When it came to Britain's next major overseas war in the Iraq conflict the MOD was much better prepared, although heavy cynicism surrounded pooled reports from embedded reporters whose autonomy was virtually nil.

8. Evaluation needed to prove return on investment

The wartime communications apparatus, largely preserved in times of peace, was a major target of the Conservative government in 1951 led by Churchill with options including the closure of the newly-formed Central Office of Information. In 1931 there were only 45 people employed wholly or partially in government publicity with a total communications spend of £30 million at 2017 prices. By 1945 1,600 people worked at the COI at a cost of £200 million. The advice from the Treasury was that closing the COI would actually cost rather than save money, but large parts of the COI were still axed. It took until the 1960s and 1970s to realise the importance of communications to tackle social problems, which coincided with the golden age of British advertising and the birth of agencies like the Saatchi brothers. Drunk-driving, rabies awareness, unwanted pregnancy, smoking, road safety, dangers of strangers, AIDs and drug taking were all tackled. Evaluation on the Green Cross Code

campaign fronted by Dave Prowse, later to find even greater fame as Darth Vader, showed a drop of 11 per cent in child casualties. The "Clunk Click!" campaign designed to increase seat belt use eventually showed an increase in usage from 14 to 32.4 per cent.

Alex Aiken

Executive Director of Government Communications, UK Government

Alex Aiken is the Executive Director of Government Communications. Based in Downing Street and the Cabinet Office, Alex is the most senior communications professional in the Civil Service. His role covers government communications strategy, management of the Cabinet Office and No.10 operation and leadership of the profession.

He was Director of Communications & Strategy at Westminster City Council, 2000-13. At Westminster he built a team that was recognised to be the best in local government and created a successful consultancy operation providing services to other organisations.

Before joining Westminster he held senior posts at Conservative Central Office, leading the Party's Campaigns Unit from 1999-2000 and the Press Office between 1995 and 1999. He has trained politicians and officials in newly democratic states around the world in communications techniques.

He lives in Pimlico, London with his family.

9. Clear lines are required between Civil Service and politics

The Blair Government understood the power of strategic communications and the power of a central grid. Communications enjoyed a seat on the top table of Government but the approach provided pitfalls. The Jo Moore affair, which led to the departure of both a special adviser and a civil service director of communications, showed how the borderline between the civil service and political communications had become difficult to police. The episode prompted a review by Sir Bob Phillis which recommended that seven principles should guide Government communications:

- Openness, not secrecy.
- More direct, unmediated communications with the public.
- Genuine engagement with the public as part of policy formation and delivery, not communication as an afterthought.
- Positive presentation of government policies and achievements, not misleading spin.
- Use of all relevant channels of communication, not excessive emphasis on national press and broadcasters.
- Coordinated communication of issues that cut across departments, not conflicting or duplicated departmental messages.
- Reinforcement of the civil service's political neutrality, rather than a blurring of government and party communications.

In many ways, the Phillis Review can be seen as the founding document of the Government Communication Service as it now exists.

10. Need for competencies in communications

The first recognition of the need for competencies first came in the aftermath of World War II when a review under the chairmanship of Treasury mandarin Sir James Crombie set out the formal role of "Information Officers", what they should be paid and what their terms of employment should be. Information officers' responsibilities were to "create and maintain an informed public opinion: to use methods of publicity to help a department to achieve its purpose." Yet it took the launch of the Government Communications Network, following the Phillis Review, six decades later to really embed modern professional standards with the first structured development programme, Engage and Evolve. The GCN, for the first time, brought press officers into the same organisation as other communications professionals. The renewed focus on standards and ethics also brought renewed scrutiny on costs which eventually led to the demise of the COI in 2012 Out went the recently created GCN to be replaced by the Government Communications Service with a focus on both efficiency, high professional standards and cross-department working. For the first time, there was a stress on communications proving its worth to sit at the top table as one of the five levers of government along with taxing, spending, legislating and regulating.

Capacity & Capability Building in the UK Government Communication Service (GCS)

By Pinky Badhan

To deliver exceptional communications across Government it's incredibly important that we develop our future leaders and ensure a pipeline of talent is being nurtured and developed to ensure that strategic communications as one of the five levers available to Government is considered a critical part of operations, as critical as investment, legislation, regulation and taxation.

Communications practitioners work in an environment of continuous change and uncertainty and need to upskill accordingly. As civil servants we need to be agile and adaptable to changing Governments, Ministers, departments and policy as well as the dizzying pace of technology and the general publics' changing interests and attitudes to issues. As such GCS staff commit to observing the highest standard of communications practice, professional development and ethics.

The Government Communication Service (GCS) is packed full of professional, talented and dedicated people and to ensure our teams are equipped to meet the needs of a fast-changing audience environment we introduced the Modern Communications Operating Model.

The MCOM Model lays down the key principles of how public sector media teams should operate. The framework demonstrates skills in the full range of disciplines: strategic communications planning; strategic engagement; internal communications; and media and campaigns. Crucially, the MCOM Model encourages teams to develop their skills across the full range of disciplines.

As well as the MCOM model, the GCS has established a set of guidelines, models and templates to continually raise the quality of practice. These include:

The GCS competency framework sets the standard for individual proficiency, by grade. Communicators should demonstrate their ability to frame campaigns using insight, apply creative ideas, and swiftly implement and assess the impact of their work.

Campaigns: The implementation of effective campaigns is at the heart of our work. For rigorous and systematic campaign development, GCS staff follow the OASIS campaigns framework, and make selective use of other GCS campaign planning tools where required.

Evaluation: GCS professionals use the GCS Evaluation Framework for every campaign, to improve performance and to take responsibility for the outputs, outtakes and outcomes of their work.

In order to be 'world-class' communicators are expected to take responsibility for boosting their skills, building expertise and planning their careers. To support this the GCS offers curriculum learning across the four MCOM areas including Personal Effectiveness and Leadership. We invest in talent including informal and formal learning programmes such as Inspire for senior leaders and the Early Talent programme, which identifies and upskills high potential individuals.

Today's communications leaders cannot afford to sit still. The world is changing. Success means that strategic communication is understood as a powerful tool.

We should look to our history to understand and practice Government communications but we should also look to the future to ensure we remain relevant, credible and connected to our citizens.

The GCS is focusing on the following, we recommend you do too.

1. Truth, told well
2. Utilising big data to understand audiences.
3. Mastering behavioural science and social marketing.
4. Messages that build trust and allow engagement.
5. Build responsive media centres. Digital by default and make algorithms your friend.
6. Prioritise new technology, but be wary of fads.

Pinky Badhan is the Head of Campaigns for the UK Prime Minister's office. Pinky has spent 2 years with the UK Government delivering the Government's priority behaviour change campaigns including Modern Slavery, Home Ownership, & Devolution campaigns.

She is a Communications professional with over 10 years experience working within Comms in the private sector. As the Head of Campaigns for the Co-op she delivered campaigns with charity partners ranging from climate change and global poverty to women's rights and community empowerment.

Pinky launched the Co-op's Global Poverty Ambassador campaign securing Bill Gates to launch the campaign at the London School of Economics. She also led a campaign to protect community energy projects which led to a change in the law with an amendment to the Energy Bill.

BEHAVIORAL REVOLUTION IN PUBLIC POLICIES

By Riccardo Viale

BEHAVIORAL REVOLUTION IN PUBLIC POLICIES

Riccardo Viale
(University of Milano-Bicocca and Herbert Simon Society)
Club of Venice
Venice 23/11/2017

BEHAVIORAL PUBLIC POLICY?

1) Public policy goal
2)Public policy tools to attain the goal
3) Comparative behavioral evaluation of the individual reactions to the tools (BIs)
4) Choice of the the most effective tool to attain the goal (ceteris paribus with ethical, political and economic contraints)

B. TOOLS

- ARCHITECTURE OF CHOICES: default options and smart enivironments of choice
- INFORMATION: debiased, transparent and simple information; warnings and reminders; symbolic incentives and imitation.
- EDUCATION: debiasing, risk literacy and deciding under uncertainty
- And...
- Economic incentives
- Regulation and shoving

B. MODELS

- NUDGE on architecture of choice and information for human welfare
- BUDGE on counter information against dangerous goods
- BRAN on architecture of choice and information (ecological rationality)
- BOOST on information and education (ecological rationality)
- Behavioral Insights for economic incentives, regulations and shoving

CRITERIA to choose B. Models

- ETHICAL: autonomy vs. paternalism (goals or means; coercitive or libertarian);
- EPISTEMOLOGICAL: unbounded rationality vs. bounded rationality
- METHODOLOGICAL: 'as if' behavioral theories vs. descriptive behavioral theories
- .....and economic advantages, administrative feasibility, and political opportunities

CASES of PUBLIC COMUNICATION

1)AQUILA EARTHQUAKE WITCH-HUNT

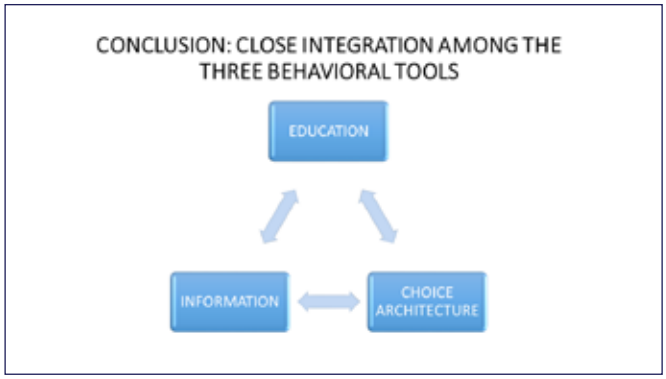
- End of March 2009: earthquake of 4.1 Richter
- Meeting of the Scientific Advisors to reassure the people
- Big tremor of 6.3 Richter on the 6° of April (309 deaths)
- On the 9° of April they declare that it is likely that the next tremors will be similar but they have no sufficient data to make reliable forecast
- October 2012 sentence for manslaughter: Witch-Hunt
- November 2015 acquital
- Scientific American: a failure in scientific communication
- Why? Uncertain events -> No prediction -> Ambiguity aversion -> Prudential Decision Making

2) KILLER CONTRACEPTIVE PILL

- 1995 UK Committee for the Safety of Medicines: Third generation contraceptive pills increase 100% the risk of thrombosis.
- Panic among the people and lost of trust on the pill: Interruption of the use of pills with unsolicited births, pregnancy complications and 13000 abortions (only in England and Wales)
- Source of the data: Comparative survey among 7000 women that showed that thrombosis increased from 1 to 2 cases
- Natural frequency language: Increase of the cases from 1 to 2 women every 7000
- Probability language: Increase of 100% of the risk

3) SWINE FLU OVERREACTION

- April 2009 an outbreak of the H1N1 swine flu captured the attention of the international media.
- The behaviour of swine flu was uncertain and ambiguous.
- UK government overreacted and attached disproportionate weight to the worst possible outcome.
- Swine flu killed 457 people whereas normal seasonal flu kills 4000 people.
- 1,2 billion Pounds was spent (1% of the annual NHS budget), unnecessary fear, repercussion of "crying wolf" effect, lives and health lost by diverting resources away from other services.
- Why? Because of Cognitive Phenomena (Oliver, 2013): Ambiguity Aversion, Sunk Cost Bias, Status Quo Bias, Regret Effect, Availability Heuristic



Riccardo Viale is Full Professor of Behavioural Sciences and Decision Making at the Department of Sociology of the University of Milano-Bicocca; former Professor of Cognitive Economics and Public Management at the National School of Administration in Rome and former Professor of Behavioral Economics for Decision Making at the LUISS School of Government in Rome.

He is Founder and General Secretary of the "International Herbert A. Simon Society", Editor in chief of Mind & Society – Cognitive Studies in Economics and Social Sciences (Springer) and President of the Rosselli Foundation of Turin.

From February 2010 until February 2014 he was Director of the Italian Cultural Institute in New York, Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Riccardo Viale was Visiting Fellow and Research Scholar in many Universities : Oxford; Aix en Provence; Rice, Houston; Fribourg; Universidade Federal of Rio de Janeiro; University of California, Santa Barbara; University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia; Universidade Federal of Niteroi, Brazil, Columbia University, New York.

Applying Behavioural Models to Government communications campaigns

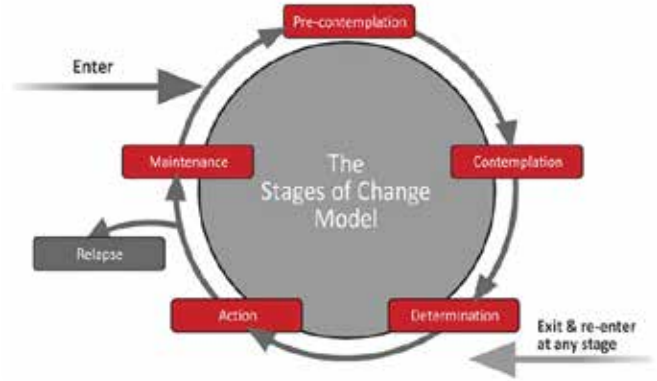
By David Watson

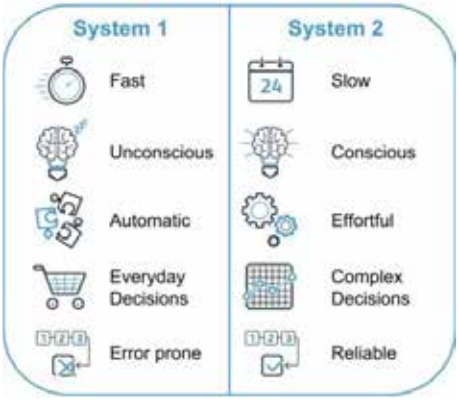
Behaviour isn't always rational and linear.

Instead, behaviours are **influenced by opportunistic and cultural cues**, based on **internal and external influences**, **cultural cues** and **wider trends**.

Behavioural Models aim to explain this human behaviour. They can also provide guidance on how to create interventions to change behaviour

They have been developed by academics and have been often tested in the context of different issues. They act as a guide to help understand why people may be acting in a certain way. However it's important to remember they are theoretical models and so may not explain human behaviour perfectly.





Case Study: The Prototype Willingness Model and teenage risky behaviour

Objective: To reduce uptake of risky behaviours (smoking, drinking alcohol, drugs and sexual relationships), build young people's resilience and equip them with skills to deal with challenges

Audience: By reaching children as they start secondary school we are able to influence them before they start experimenting with risky behaviours – this means we can focus on prevention rather than cessation and in doing this reduce the long term burden to the state

Strategy: The approach was built from the **Gibbons & Gerrard Prototype Willingness Model**:

- Large amount of academic research sits behind it including brain scans and intervention testing.
- It explains that risky youth behaviour (e.g. smoking and drinking) is often not planned or intended. Instead made on impulse using mental shortcuts in the moment.

The model shows a **reasoned path** where behaviour is based on intention to act and a **social reaction path** where behaviour is based on willingness to engage in the behaviour. For 11 – 16 year olds the social reaction path is more dominant than the reasoned path.

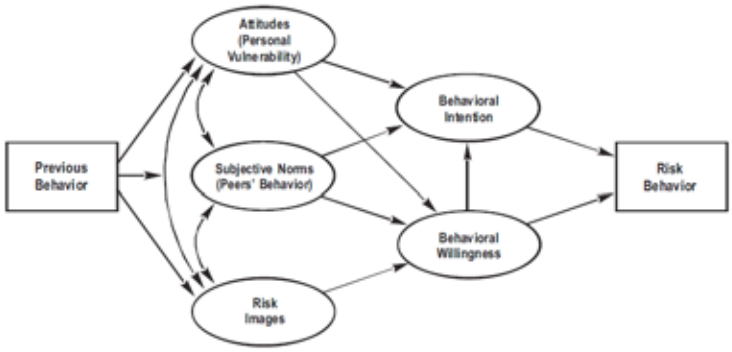


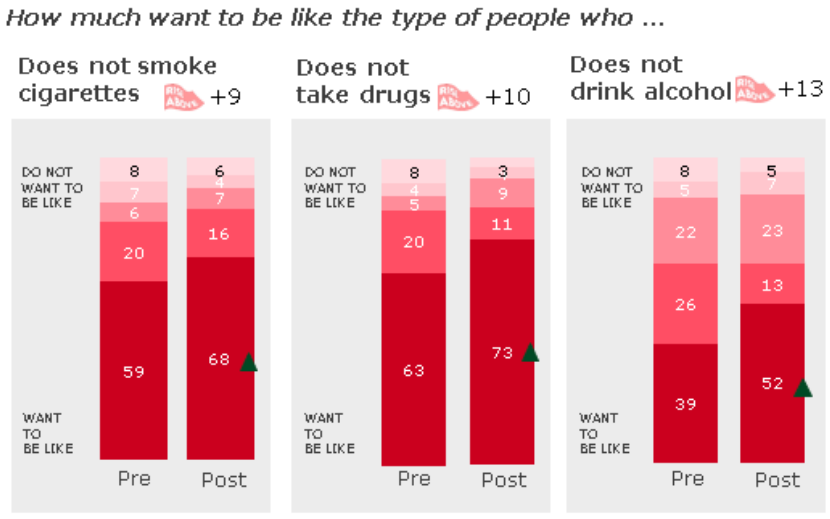
Figure 1. The prototype/willingness model.

Implementation: A peer to peer campaign across multiple formats, supported in schools

Evaluation: We saw changes in people wanting to be seen as risk avoiders.

Our research shows we have reduced Behavioural Willingness in 9 – 13% of the intervention group.

They are therefore less likely to take up risky behaviours



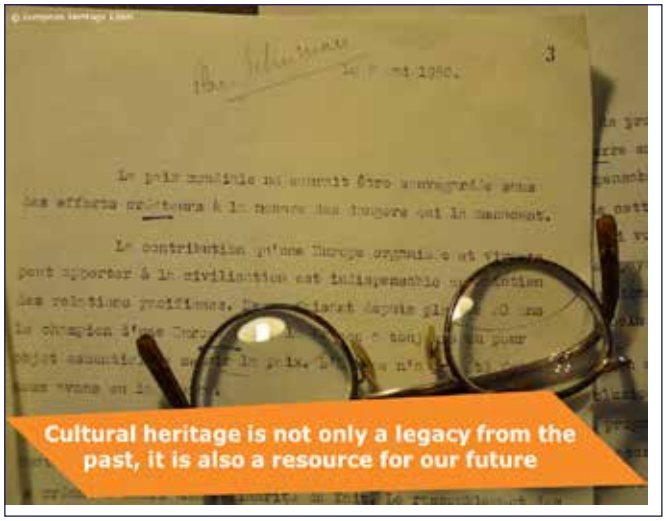
David Watson

Deputy Director of Communication at the UK Department for International Trade

Former Head of Marketing, Public Health England

The communication campaign for the European Year of cultural heritage - 2018

By Michel Magnier



For whom?

- Children (10-15)
- Young people (15-25)
- The wider public
- Cultural heritage professionals

And all curious people!

With whom?

- Member States, regional and local authorities
- Civil society
- Cultural heritage professionals
- International organisations

The European Year belongs to all!

How?

Management of the Year at national level

- **National Coordinators** manage the Year in Member States.
- **Supported by Multipliers**: Creative Europe desks, Commission and European Parliament representations, cultural heritage stakeholders, the cultural sector, etc.

Creative Europe Desk Vlaanderen

Europos Parlamento Informacijos biuras Lietuvoje

EDUSTUSTO SUOMESSA

European Commission | Culture

How?

Management of the Year at European level

- Joint effort of **European Institutions**: Commission, Parliament, Council of the EU, European External Action Service, Committee of the Regions and European Economic and Social Committee.
- With **DG Education and Culture** in the lead, it will be a Joint effort of **different departments of the Commission**, focusing on: education, regional development, social cohesion, environment, tourism, research, audio-visual policy, etc.

European Commission | Culture

How?

Management of the Year at European level

- The Commission is assisted by a **Committee of stakeholders,** composed of 35 representative organisations.
- **International organisations** including UNESCO and the Council of Europe are also closely associated.

VOICES OF CULTURE

http://www.voicesofculture.eu/

European Commission | Culture

How?

Initiatives at European level

- **Transnational projects** and **European initiatives**
- **Numerous events**, starting with the launch of the Year at the European Culture Forum on 7-8 December 2017
- **Communication campaign** and **Eurobarometer survey**

European Commission | Culture

Key events in 2018

European Culture Forum

- Biannual highly-visible event
- The December 2017 edition will be the occasion of the launch of the Year

http://ec.europa.eu/culture/forum/

European Heritage Days

- Celebrated yearly in September
- Thousands of events and access to rarely opened sites
- Over 30 million participants every year

http://www.europeanheritagedays.com/

Key events in 2018

European Heritage Label

- For European sites with symbolic value and historic importance
- 29 sites designated since 2013

EUROPEAN HERITAGE LABEL

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/heritage-label_en

European Capitals of Culture 2018

- 2 designated cities each year since 1985
- Highlighting the richness of Europe's cultural diversity
- 2018 Capitals of Culture: Valletta (Malta) and Leeuwarden (the Netherlands)

EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF CULTURE

https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en

How?

Budget

Total budget of EUR 8 million for 2017 and 2018:

- To finance transnational projects through the dedicated Creative Europe call;
- To support the implementation of the 10 European initiatives;
- For the Year's communication strategy (Euro-barometer survey, production of toolkits to reach target audiences, etc.).

How?

IN ADDITION

- Funding for cultural heritage will be available through different EU programmes:
- **Erasmus+,**
- **Horizon 2020,**
- **COSME,**
- **Europe for Citizens,**
- **EU structural and cohesion funds, etc.**

Ten European initiatives

- Each initiative will cluster a number of **projects and actions**
- They will be implemented by the European Commission in **collaboration with key partners** (Council of Europe, UNESCO, ICOMOS, etc.)
- These ten **highly-visible** initiatives will ensure the **legacy** of the Year after 2018
- They answer **four main objectives**, defining what European cultural heritage stands for...

Ten European initiatives responding to four objectives

Engagement	• **Shared heritage:** cultural heritage belongs to us all • **Heritage at school:** children discovering Europe's most precious treasures and traditions • **Youth for heritage:** young people bringing new life to heritage
Sustainability	• **Heritage in transition:** re-imagining industrial, religious, military sites and landscapes • **Tourism and heritage:** responsible and sustainable tourism around cultural heritage
Protection	• **Cherishing heritage:** developing quality standards for interventions on cultural heritage • **Heritage at risk:** fighting against illicit trade in cultural goods and managing risks for cultural heritage
Innovation	• **Heritage-related skills:** better education and training for traditional and new professions • **All for heritage:** fostering social innovation and people's and communities participation • **Science for heritage:** research, innovation, science and technology for the benefit of heritage

For more information:

https://ec.europa.eu/culture/european-year-cultural-heritage-2018_en

#EuropeForCulture

EAC-EYCH2018@ec.europa.eu

Legal basis

Michel Magnier

Director for Culture and Creativity, European Commission

Michel Magnier (born in 1960) graduated in Institut d'Etudes Politiques de Paris (1981) and the Ecole nationale d'Administration (1986).

He started his professional career in the French public service, serving as a "sous-préfet" in the French West Indies and in the Provence. He joined the European Commission in 1992 and worked then in President Jacques Delors' private office. From 1995, he held various positions in the European Commission services, in particular in the directorates generals in charge of human resources, budget, competition, and home affairs.

He has been a director since 2008, and took up his current post of Director for Culture and Creativity in January 2013.

Spotlight on

THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE 2018

December 2017

2018 is the European Year of Cultural Heritage, officially launched at the European Culture Forum on 7 December 2017 in Milan, Italy. Cultural heritage shapes our everyday lives. It surrounds us in Europe's towns and cities, natural landscapes and archaeological sites. It is not only found in literature, art and objects, but also in the crafts we learn from our ancestors, the stories we tell our children, the food we enjoy and the films we watch and recognise ourselves in.

Cultural heritage binds Europe together through our common history and values. It also represents the richness and diversity of our cultural traditions. Our shared cultural heritage is to be understood, cherished and celebrated. Yet cultural heritage is not only a legacy from the past. It also helps us forge the way ahead and design our future.

2018 sees an unparalleled series of initiatives and events across Europe to get people closer to and more involved with their cultural heritage, to encourage the sharing and appreciation of Europe's rich heritage and to reinforce a sense of belonging to a common European space. The European Year of Cultural Heritage belongs to us all!

2018 EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE #EuropeForCulture

OUR HERITAGE: WHERE THE PAST MEETS THE FUTURE

WHY A EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE?

Cultural heritage brings people together and contributes to more cohesive societies. It creates growth and jobs in cities and regions and is central to Europe's exchanges with the rest of the world. This is a great potential for Europe, but it must be better exploited — and this Year can help us do so.

The Year focuses on children and young people, who will become guardians of our heritage for the next generations. This educational value of cultural heritage is emphasised, as is its contribution to sustainable economic and social development.

The Year also promotes smart ways to preserve, manage and reuse Europe's heritage.

A snapshot of Europe's rich cultural heritage

With **453 inscribed sites**, Europe as a region accounts for almost **half of UNESCO's World Heritage List**.

With 89 inscribed elements, the **EU accounts for a quarter of UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.**

There are **31 certified Council of Europe Cultural Routes,** crossing over 50 countries in Europe and beyond.

Six of the world's 10 most visited museums in 2016, according to **The Art Newspaper, are in Europe**. Altogether, these six popular museums had over 35 million visitors in 2016.

More than **54 million items** from the collections of over 3 700 European cultural institutions are accessible through **Europeana**, Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage.

The network of **27 000 protected Natura 2000 sites** accounts for 18 % of the EU's land and almost 6 % of its marine territory.

Sources: UNESCO 2016; Council of Europe, 2017; European Commission, 2017; The Art Newspaper, 2016.

Cultural heritage matters for Europe

Over
300 000
people are employed in the EU cultural heritage sector.

7.8 million
EU jobs are indirectly linked to heritage (e.g. interpretation and security).

The ecosystem services provided by the Natura 2000 network are estimated to be worth around
EUR 200-300 billion
per year.

68 %
of Europeans agree that the presence of cultural heritage can influence their holiday destination.

For each direct job, the heritage sector produces up to
26.7
indirect ones, for example in the construction and tourism sectors. To compare, the ratio in the car industry is 6.3 indirect jobs for each direct job.

Europe's cultural heritage faces a variety of challenges, ranging from changes in the way people participate in cultural activities to environmental threats and the illicit trafficking of cultural objects.

How can we better promote the great potential of cultural heritage? How can we maximise its social and economic benefits? How can we better protect and manage our cultural heritage while ensuring that people from all backgrounds have access to it?

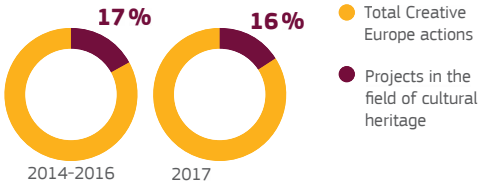
The European Year of Cultural Heritage provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on how to better address the potential and the challenges of the sector.

Sources: Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe report, 2016; Special Eurobarometer on Europeans and Cultural Heritage (2017); Linking Natura 2000 and cultural heritage, 2017.

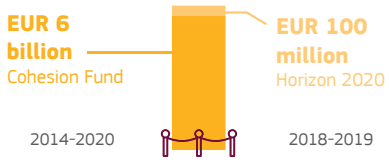
A GRASSROOTS-BASED YEAR

The European Year of Cultural Heritage is implemented through a series of initiatives at European, national, regional and local levels. At the national and subnational levels, national coordinators designated by EU Member States take the lead.

The EU's investment in cultural heritage



Cultural heritage is one of the main sectors supported through Creative Europe and one of the most represented sectors among the projects selected for financing so far. Out of a total of 426 actions supported between 2014 and 2016, 17 % are in the field of cultural heritage. For 2017, 81 cooperation projects have been selected, of which 16 % (13 projects) are in the field of cultural heritage.



An estimated EUR 6 billion are available for the cultural and creative sectors and cultural heritage through the Cohesion Fund for the period 2014-2020. Moreover, in 2018-2019, EUR 100 million will be available for cultural heritage-related research under the Horizon 2020 programme.

From 2007 to 2013, the EU invested EUR 4.4 billion in heritage projects for regional development and rural development, and around EUR 100 million in heritage research.

Source: European Commission, 2017

WHAT HAPPENS IN 2018?

The Year sees thousands of events and celebrations taking place across Europe.

Projects and initiatives implemented in EU Member States, municipalities and regions are complemented by transnational projects funded by the EU. In 2018, cultural heritage projects are being funded with the support of **Erasmus+, Europe for Citizens, Horizon 2020** and other EU programmes. A dedicated **call** for heritage projects has also been launched under the **Creative Europe** programme, funding up to 25 transnational projects.

The Year also features prominently in the following cultural heritage activities at EU level.

- **The European Heritage Days** are a key European activity organised annually during the autumn. More than 70 000 events take place every year, reaching over 30 million people.
- **The European Heritage Label** has been awarded to 29 sites that are milestones in the creation of today's Europe, celebrating and symbolising European values and history.
- **Two European Capitals of Culture** are designated each year in order to highlight the cultural richness of Europe. In 2018, the capitals are **Valletta** (Malta) and **Leeuwarden** (Netherlands).
- **The EU Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Awards** annually recognises best practices related to heritage conservation, management, research, education and communication.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN BEYOND 2018?

To make sure our efforts leave an imprint beyond 2018, the Commission, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, UNESCO, and other partners, will run long-term projects around 10 themes (10 European initiatives). These include activities with schools, research on innovative solutions for reusing heritage buildings or the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural goods. The objective is to help trigger real change in the way we enjoy, protect and promote heritage, making sure that the European Year benefits citizens in the longer term.

The 10 European initiatives correspond to four principles that define what European cultural heritage stands for: engagement; sustainability; protection and innovation.

Ten European initiatives for the European Year of Cultural Heritage

Engagement	1. Shared heritage: cultural heritage belongs to us all 2. Heritage at school: children discovering Europe's most precious treasures and traditions 3. Youth for heritage: young people bringing new life to heritage
Sustainability	4. Heritage in transition: re-imagining industrial, religious and military sites and landscapes 5. Tourism and heritage: responsible and sustainable tourism around cultural heritage
Protection	6. Cherishing heritage: developing quality standards for interventions on cultural heritage 7. Heritage at risk: fighting against illicit trade in cultural goods and managing risks for cultural heritage
Innovation	8. Heritage-related skills: better education and training for traditional and new professions 9. All for heritage: fostering social innovation and people's and communities' participation 10. Science for heritage: research, innovation, science and technology for the benefit of heritage

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED IN THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF CULTURAL HERITAGE?

- Visit the Year's website for updates on the latest developments: **http://europa.eu/cultural-heritage**
- Subscribe to the Year's **newsletter** to receive news and stories.
- Follow the Year on **facebook.com/CreativeEuropeEU/** and **twitter: @europe_creative**
- Share your views using the Year's hashtag **#EuropeForCulture**.
- Contact the national coordinators in your country to know more about upcoming events.
- Label your project! The Year's label will be available for events and projects that contribute to the objectives of the Year.
- Show your support and spread the message!

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An interactive version of this publication, containing links to online content, is available in PDF and HTML format: http://publications.europa.eu/webpub/com/factsheets/cultural-heritage/en/

Part of the **Spotlight on** series of the European Commission

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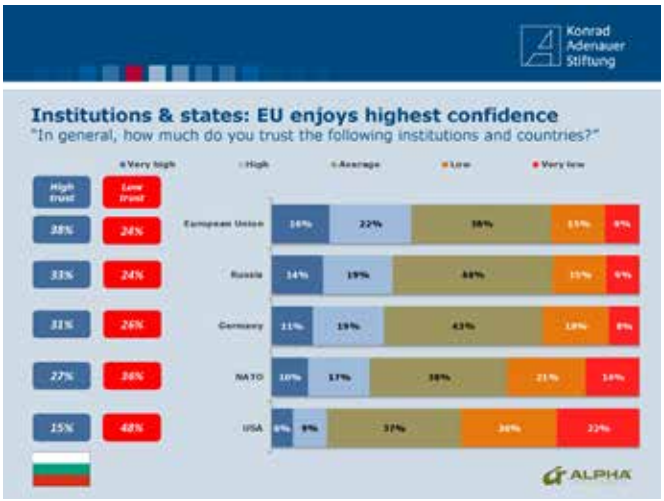
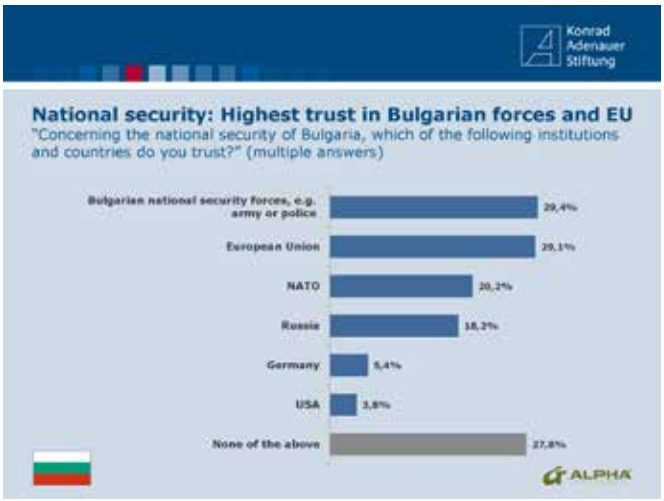
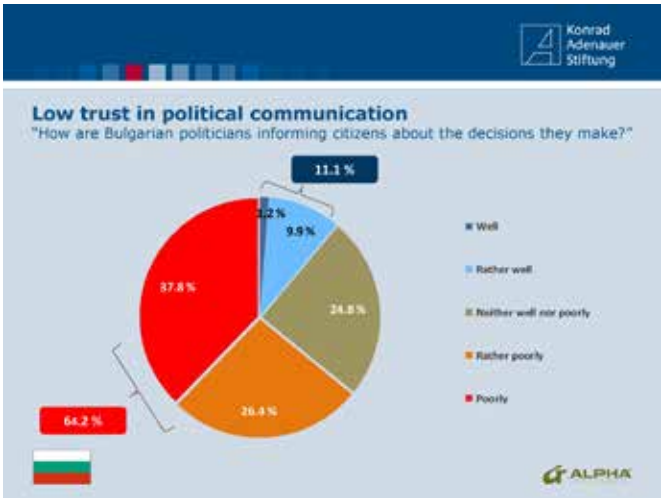
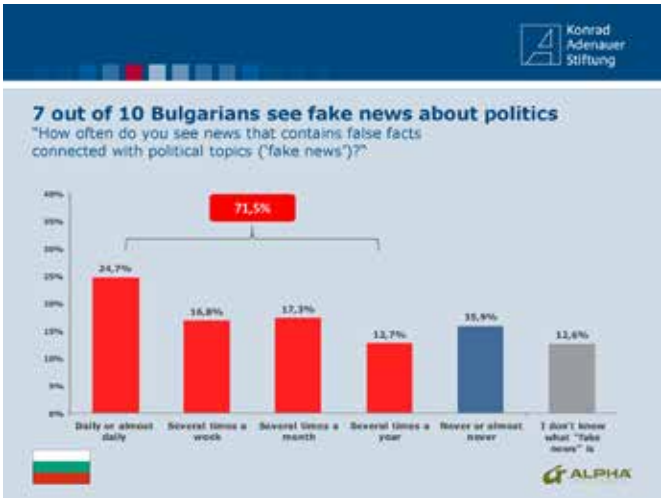
GEOPOLITICS, DISINFORMATION AND MEDIA FR

By Christian Spahr







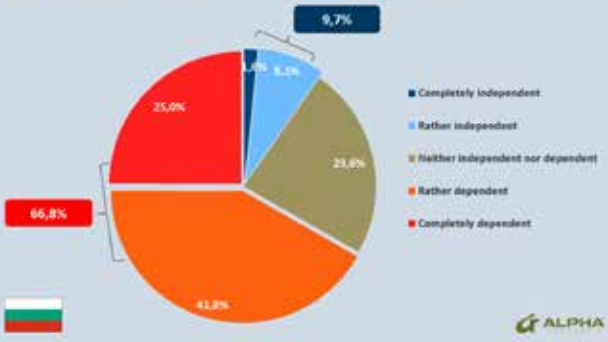


EEDOM

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

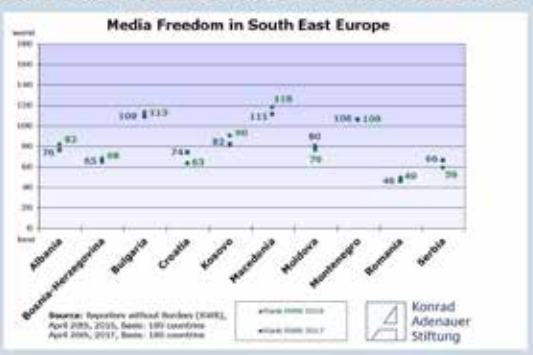
Only one in ten Bulgarians thinks the media are free

"How dependent or independent are the media in Bulgaria?"



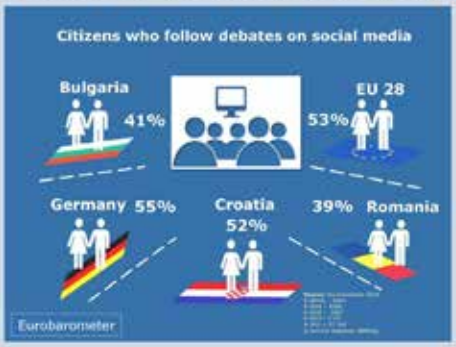
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

SINCE YEARS NO PROGRESS IN MEDIA FREEDOM



Konrad Adenauer Stiftung

SOCIAL MEDIA – MORE AND MORE POLITICAL



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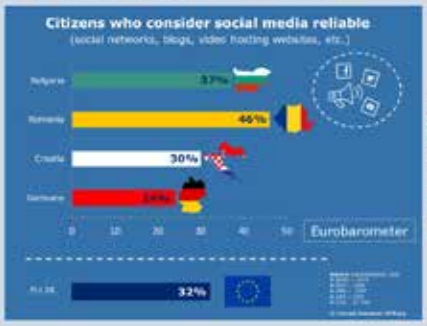
BLIND TRUST IN SOCIAL MEDIA?



Comparison:
10 % of Bulgarians and 28 % of Romanians believe in independence of *professional* media (KAS polls 2017/2015)

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GEOPOLITICAL COMPETITION IN THE BALKANS

- EU enlargement process slowed down + drawback of USA = **power vacuum**
- Perceived **lack of credibility** because EU accession does not seem realistic to citizens
- Vacuum of **soft power** is being filled by Russia, Turkey, Arab states, China
- In their **narratives towards SEE**, Russia, Turkey and Arab states emphasise on common religious values and/or cultural similarities
- EU must appear as **reliable partner** to SEE – giving security by intensive dialogue

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INCONSISTENT PERCEPTION OF THE EU IN S.E.E.

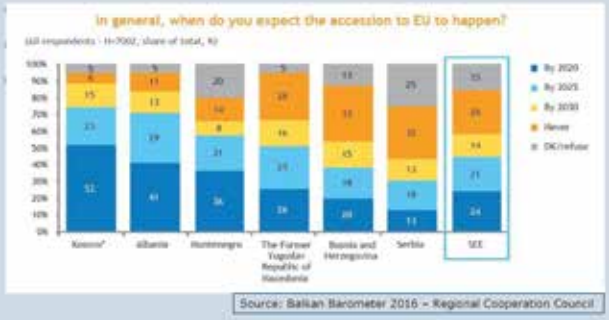
Source: Balkan Barometer 2016 – Regional Cooperation Council

NEW MEMBER STATES: HIGHER TRUST IN EU

- Generally: growing mistrust in EU because of political uncertainties
- But: trust in EU is higher in Romania/Bulgaria/Croatia than EU average
- Eurobarometer 2016:

	European Union			Parliament			Government		
Tend to	Trust	not to trust	don't know	Trust	not to trust	don't know	Trust	not to trust	don't know
EU (n= 27 705)	36%	54%	10%	32%	62%	6%	31%	64%	5%
BG (n= 1 012)	49%	34%	17%	15%	77%	8%	22%	70%	8%
HR (n= 1 062)	43%	50%	7%	24%	73%	3%	26%	71%	3%
RO (n= 1 005)	52%	41%	7%	22%	74%	4%	29%	66%	5%

TOO HIGH AND TOO LOW EXPECTATIONS



Source: Balkan Barometer 2016 – Regional Cooperation Council

S.E.E. CITIZENS NOT WELL INFORMED ABOUT EU

- Although EU confirmed accession perspective, **many do not expect to enter the EU**
- Citizens in SEE are not well informed about EU
- E.g. Serbians think biggest donors are: Russia (25%), EU (21%), China (21%) – in reality: EU (1st), USA (2nd), Germany (3rd) (Source: SEIO – December 2016, N = 1054)

- Eurobarometer 2016: „To what extent do you think that you are well informed or not about European matters?"

	Well informed		Not well informed		Don't know	
EU (n= 27 705)	38%	-3	60%	+2	2%	+1
BG (n= 1 012)	34%	-4	63%	+3	3%	+1
HR (n= 1 062)	37%	-11	63%	+11	0%	=
RO (n= 1 005)	39%	-10	60%	+10	1%	=

COMMS CHALLENGES: SEECOM 2017 CONCLUSIONS

- European governments struggling to engage citizens in a **dialogue on a united Europe**
- In South East Europe, third parties are working systematically to offer **alternative narratives**
- The visibility & **public credit** that EU receives in SEE is not in proportion to EU's investment
- Public **support for enlargement** in EU disturbingly low – need for coordinated action
- Political messaging will not suffice: Effective comms require **active engagement** with local communities, civil society and businesses
- In crisis of trust, citizen dialogue requires highest ethical and **professional standards**

SEECOM 2017 Conference, Berlin

SEECOM

NEW EXPERT BOOK: RECONNECTING WITH CITIZENS

- Reconnecting with citizens – from values to big data: Communication of governments, the EU and political parties in times of populism and filter bubbles

- ✓ **Strategic comms of governments**
- ✓ **Communication of EU enlargement**
- ✓ **Digital election campaigning**
- ✓ **Citizen dialogue via social media**

- 19 leading experts from Western Europe, USA, UK and South East Europe, amongst others:

Angelina Eichhorst , Michael Mann (EEAS)
Alex Aiken (chief communicator, UK government)
Erik den Hoedt (chief communicator, Dutch govt.)
Vincenzo Le Voci (Secretary-Gen., Club of Venice)
Vuk Vujnović (Secretary General, SEECOM)
John Verrico (Immediate-Past President, U.S. National Association of Government Communicators)
Roland Heintze, Mario Voigt (CDU politicians)

MEDIA, COMMUNICATION & POLITICS @ KAS: KEY INSTRUMENTS 2017/2018

- **Public fora**: SEEMF, Sofia, 27-29 Nov. 2017
- **Workshops**: Stratcom (anti-fake news) training for government spokespersons, 4-5 Dec. 2017
- **Seminars**: Entrepreneurial Journalism, February
- **Conferences**: Multi-stakeholder conference (April, t.b.c.) & SEECOM Conference (6-7 Sept.)
- **Summer schools**: Political Communication (17-22 June) & Investigative Journalism (19-25 Aug.)
- **Partnerships**: European Commission, Club of Venice, universities, media NGOs, DW & others
- **Opinion polls, monitoring & evaluation**

South East Europe Media Forum 2016 in Belgrade

SEEMF
South East Europe Media Forum

Christian Spahr
Spokesperson at the European Commission

Christian Spahr has recently joined the European Commission as a Coordinating Spokesperson in the field of economic and financial affairs, jobs, economy, finance and the euro.

Christian is a media and political communications expert, former Head of the Media Programme SEE at the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Sofia, where he offered further education for journalists and media policy advice and promoted professional political communication.

From 2003 to 2012 he was press spokesman for the German business association Bitkom, he initiated and co-edited studies on digital society and was a business editor with German regional newspaper Sächsische Zeitung.

Christian is a board member of SEECOM (South East Europe Public Sector Communication Association). He is a longstanding partner of the Club of Venice and has participated as a speaker or presenter at several international conferences.

Luxembourg, seminar “Open Government a

LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Service information et presse

CLUB OF VENICE

Seminar

“Open Government and Open Data:
New Horizons
for Communication and Public Access to Information"

Luxembourg, 8-9 March 2018

38

Meeting venue:

European Convention Center Luxembourg (ECCL),
4 Place de l'Europe, 1499 Luxembourg

MEETING LANGUAGES EN, FR

THURSDAY 8 MARCH 2018

Late afternoon (16:30-18.00) - Arrival of participants in Luxembourg

18:00 - Meeting point: European Convention Center
- Transfer by bus to dinner venue (departure from the ECC).
- Registration and welcome reception

18:30 Welcome statements from:
- **Jean-Claude Olivier**, Director, Information and Press Service, Luxembourg
- **Vincenzo Le Voci**, Secretary-General of the Club of Venice

18:45 **Address from:**

- XAVIER BETTEL, Prime Minister of Luxembourg

19:30 Welcome dinner hosted by the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel

(venue: Neumünster Abbey - dress code: business)

- Key-Note from **Anthony Zacharzewski**, President of The Democratic Society

FRIDAY 9 MARCH 2018

9:00 Presentation of the seminar (programme, structure, focus) and distribution of n° 11 edition of the Club of Venice review "Convergences"

9:15 **OPEN GOVERNMENT session**

- Increasing commitment to information transparency and public engagement
- Generating social cohesion, inclusion and fostering citizens' participation through government accountability
- Improving citizens' trust by strengthening information provision, increasing timeliness and accuracy and facilitating relations with public authorities

Moderators:

- Luc Dockendorf (Counsellor, human rights, international organisations, global and cyber policy issues, OGP Point of Contact, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Luxembourg)

- Anthony Zacharzewski (The Democratic Society)

- Open Government/Open Government Partnership (OGP) work in progress. Feedback, case studies (National Action Plans):
  - **Thomas Townsend, Head of Digital, Cabinet Office, United Kingdom**
  - **Sebastian Haselbeck, Advisor, Open Government & Open Data, OGP Point of Contact, Ministry of Interior, Germany**
  - interventions from external experts

11:00 **Working together on Open Government**.

Round table discussions on open government themes, with the participation of an external expert in open government and citizen engagement.

Participants will be able to choose the table they want to join in advance (option to be chosen when registering on line with the event). Each table will be asked to come up with opportunities for collaborative working or innovations that could be taken forward within the CoV network.

Table themes:

- Transparency and communications
- Involving citizens in decisions: inter-governmental and inter-institutional cooperation
- Partnerships with civil society
- Transforming organisations for open government

12:00 Report from the thematic groups and Conclusions

12:45 LUNCH

14:00 OPEN DATA session

- Open Data in progress (from the 2006 "The Guardian's "Free Our Data" campaign up to nowadays, through milestones such as the adoption of the G8 Open Data Charter, the Obama Executive Order, the creation of the UK Open Government License, data.gov.uk, data.gouv.fr and global open data indexes)
- How data technologies, instruments, infrastructures and standards are rapidly evolving and Member States and institutions are struggling to cope with the Open Data challenges and deadlines, in both technical and legislative dimensions

Moderators:
Vincenzo Le Voci
Anthony Zacharzewski

Contributions/case studies:

- **Jean-Claude Olivier**, Director, Information and Press Service, Luxembourg government (scope and objectives, legal framework in progress, link between open data and access to information, coordination, national and international networking)
- **Paul Suijkerbuijk**, Programmanager www.data.overheid.nl, the Open Data portal of the Netherlands (or another Dutch representative)
- **Margus Mägi** (Estonia) (feedback from https://opendata.riik.ee/en)
- **Luca Martinelli**, Publications Office of the European Union (EU Open Data Portal in progress)
- **Lucie Verachten**, Council of the EU, Information Knowledge Management, DG Communication (on the 9 October 2017 Decision on the Council open data policy and the reuse of Council documents)
- interventions from external experts

15:45 Round-table discussion:

- how increased investments on improved open access to public data will cater for more opportunities for individual citizens, the media, civil society and business
- how can existing barriers/hesitations to establish open government practices could be overcome
- how can work in partnership contribute in this regard.

17:15 CONCLUDING session

- **Key issues emerged**
- **Possible cooperation and future events on this topic**

Outcome of the Club of Venice seminar "Op
New Horizons for Public Communication an

By the editors

Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, introduced the seminar outlining the impact of digital technology on governmental and institutional information, transparency and public communication strategies.

The PM stressed the need for public authorities to increase commitment when facing today's challenges, strengthening outreach, developing concrete narratives and encouraging citizens to take active part in the political debate.

The event consisted of two interwoven sessions:

- The morning session devoted to exploring Open Government best practices
  * Increasing commitment to information transparency and public engagement
  * Generating social cohesion, inclusion and fostering citizens' participation through government accountability
  * Improving citizens' trust by strengthening information provision, increasing timeliness and accuracy and facilitating relations with public authorities
- The afternoon session focused on Open Data (OD) challenges and opportunities
  * Open Data in progress (from the 2006 "The Guardian's "Free Our Data" campaign up to now, through milestones such as the adoption of the G8 Open Data Charter, the Obama Executive Order, the creation of the UK Open Government License, data.gov.uk, data.gouv.fr and global open data indexes)
  * How data technologies, instruments, infrastructures and standards are rapidly evolving and Member States and institutions are struggling to cope with the Open Data challenges and deadlines, in both technical and legislative dimensions

The **Open Government** session, moderated by Luc Dockendorf (Luxembourg MFA Counsellor) and Anthony Zacharzewski (President of the Democratic Society), was structured as follows:

- one plenary part, where some national experts delivered information on work in progress regarding the implementation of national action plans under the OGP framework
- work in breakout groups:
  * Tackling transparency and communications
  * Involving citizens in decisions: inter-governmental and inter-institutional cooperation
  * Partnerships with civil society
  * Transforming organisations for open government

Feedback from participants covered the following aspects:

en Government and Open Data: d Access to Information"

- Updates on UK, DE, LU and EE on OGP work in progress (cultural shifts, inclusiveness, political backing, monitoring cost-effectiveness, the impact of e-petitions and smart-votes, investments in training for civil servants, collaborative designing of public services, voting on budget of municipalities)
- An update on the EP's communication strategy in view of the European elections 2019 and the need for MS' direct involvement: merging forces and breaking down barriers, drawing inspiration from public opinion surveys, organising joint events and countering disinformation
- The link between Open Government and internationally subscribed objectives and political commitments (i.e. UN sustainable development goal 16, Open Data Charter, ...)
- The need for refraining from cognitive bias, for authenticity and ethical use of data
- Transparency and accountability at the heart of open government - in several cases, at the heart of a cultural and behavioural change (DE referred to the link between OG planning and administrative modernization)
- Trust cements relationships; knowing the audiences is a must
- More effective use of data, thinking ex-ante about the possible implications
- The ongoing efforts to strengthen internal coordination of the OGP processes across levels and ministries (as highlighted by DE)
- The need for closer links between local and national governments
- The paramount relationship with civil society, overcoming fears that closer cooperation could undermine trust in co-creation processes (some mentioned "sustainable relationship", others referred to NGOs as part of the government designing process and actively participating in experts' boards)
- Other forms of cooperation partly availing of digital cooperation, such as National Conventions and European Years (2015 EYD, 2018 EYCH), were also mentioned as effective collaborative and inclusive models
- Concerns: data security implications; risks of privileged access to info; FOIA still only recognized in 9 of 47 CoE members

Discussion focused on five areas, arising from the workshop, where there was potential for collaboration between club members and others to advance open government in the member states and institutions:

- Developing the competencies and skills for open government in government and in civil society
- A shared citizen and needs analysis to understand how citizens want to participate, and how they want to use open information
- Considering how intermediary organisations can support productive conversations between government and civil society
- A shared understanding of how to give the right context when communicating information around participation or transparency initiatives
- A better way of working collectively through networks and partnerships that bring government and civil society together

Attention was also drawn to the new Open Government Network for Europe[1], which is launching on 22 May 2018 and will seek to build a coalition of civil society organisations across Europe, focused on transparency and citizen participation.

The **Open Data** session, moderated by Anthony Zacharzewski and Vincenzo Le Voci, enabled governments and institutions to provide feedback on national and EU plans, sharing feedback on legal framework in progress, repositioning governmental activities in all digital matters as a target of inter-ministerial projects (re. cooperation between LU and FR Etalab), links between OD and access to information and users' interest and usage.

Feedback from participants (for the Council, contribution from Lucie Verachten) covered the following aspects:

- The Open Data's main purposes: 1) to enable innovators in the private sector to use publicly available government data to develop services and solutions that can have widespread economic and social benefits; 2) to transform governments' working approach to adopt more efficient and effective practices; 3) to facilitate citizens' access to government data and hold legislators and public officials more accountable (close link to transparency)
- The objective: as suggested also by the title of the conference, data to be 'open' but also 'usable, useful' and most of all 'used'
- November 2017 study on "Open Data Maturity in Europe" [2]. It shows that Europe has made significant progress in recent years and that more than 50% of the Member States can be considered as trendsetters
- The Council Decision on 'Open Data Policy and Reuse of Council documents' of 9 October 2017[3]
- The impulse given by the Estonian Presidency of the Council

1 http://www.demsoc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/OpenGovandtheEU_FromCommitmentstoAction_SummaryandRecommendations.pdf

2 https://www.capgemini.com/consulting/resources/open-data-maturity-in-europe-2017/

3 https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32017D1842

of the EU (one of its four main priorities being 'A digital Europe and the free movement of data')[4]

- The EU Open Data Portal [5], managed by the Publications Office of the EU, which provides access to open data sets published by EU institutions, agencies and other bodies
- The European Data Portal[6], platform set up by the European Commission as part of the Digital Single Market, which harvests the metadata of Public Sector Information available on public data portals across European countries
- The recommendations to produce data sets in a 'machine-readable' format (re. the suggestion by Tim Berners-Lee, the WWW inventor and Linked Data initiator, to adopt a 5-star deployment scheme for Open Data[7])
- The increasing media's interest and coverage

Participants were briefed about successful Open Data projects, welcoming the ongoing OD implementation and the increasing cooperation in this field at governmental and institutional level, and shared their views on the following opportunities and challenges:

- Explore synergies on promoting data re-use more efficiently, while developing clear communication strategies aimed at highlighting OD and reuse benefits (NL referred to OD's "economic, societal and democratic value")
- The need for internal synergies (inter-service, inter-ministerial, among communities (LU setting up first groups of interests on topics such as legislation, transport, housing;)
- Refraining from framing Open Data only as a technical subject "for experts only" or a simple tool for financial growth and innovation; focusing also on its capacity to enable and reinforce governance transparency and accountability
- Only concerted action and accurate and consistent implementation of the OD philosophy can help administrations build/improve an internal culture of transparency
- The crucial link between Open Data and access to information and the need for a legislative framework in these fields
- Better integration of OD in the communication plans and ex-ante verification if there are enough expectations before producing new data sets likely to "evolve" (EE)
- Data usefulness and usage: the need for comprehensive statistics based on clear metrics
- Risks of data manipulations
- "OD Incubators" [8] role as catalysts, in particular towards SMEs
- The need to continue to organise more 'datathons' (these wide spectrum digital forums having high potential benefits also for public diplomacy - LU organising the 3rd event of this kind a few days after this seminar; others being organised by institutions, also in cooperation with presidencies) and demonstrations of relevant platforms (such as the website 'VoteWatch Europe' [9])
- How to influence/encourage press and media to use the open data sets in the OD portals, thus contributing to enhance the culture of institutional and governmental transparency
- The need to capture requirements for open data sets in order to be "useful and used" in a broader communication strategy

The seminar suggested further conversation and collaboration between members, bringing in others as needed, with an update for other members and a review of progress at the November plenary foreseen in Venice on 22/23 November 2018.

The Club roadmap in this field before the autumn plenary will include:

- Contributing to developing work in partnership between the EU and OGP network, aligning actions in countries and on projects where they share goals, values and commitments
- Contributing to strengthening networks to create action plans on OG/OD to enhance information provision, participation, accountability and transparency, continuing to draw inspiration from existing good work and key documents such as the Paris Declaration of Open Government Principles[10] and the G8 Open Data Charter[11]
- A mapping exercise (in close cooperation with national and institutional authorities, with the EU Publications Office and external partners), aimed at facilitating the exchange of information and best practice:
  * contact details of OG and OD governmental and institutional services and officials;
  * a comprehensive picture of the most relevant EU-wide Open Government and Open Data platforms (national web sites, EU institutional portals and international organizations' sites)
  * a list of historical sources and relevant library
- The establishment of a calendar of OG/OD events

4 See also the « Estonian Vision Paper on the Free Movement of Data » (https://www.eu2017.ee/sites/default/files/inline-files/EU2017_FMD_visionpaper.pdf)

5 https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/home. 70 institutional data providers, 12 000 data sets, metadata repository, catalogue of applications, full copyright-free use. It also publishes the EU Budget

6 https://www.europeandataportal.eu/, with over 800,475 datasets provided by Member States' administrations.

7 http://5stardata.info/en/

8 at European level, see https://edincubator.eu/

9 http://www.votewatch.eu/

10 https://www.opengovpartnership.org/paris-declaration

11 https://opendatacharter.net/resource/g8-open-data-charter/

Open Government in Four Countries: Challenges and Strategies for Digitisation and Proactive Information Release [1]

By Alex Ingrams, Stavros Zouridis and Vera Leijtens

Introduction

The growth of digital technology use in government has led to opportunities for better access for citizens to government documents and data. These technology changes also prompt governments to be more proactive in releasing information rather than responding to specific requests for information. Access to government information has always been a challenging area because it is difficult for public organizations to determine how to bear the cost of access while promoting the clear benefit to society of an open government. Today, in the digital age, the speed and storage capacity of digital devices and servers, as well as the ubiquitous use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) such as smartphones, websites, and apps lends greater seriousness to these questions of open government.

Challenges of proactive information disclosure in the digital age are vital for the government of the Netherlands to address. They are new challenges, but they are also challenges that are common or similar to governments around the world. The present assignment of Tilburg University Institute of Governance is to address this challenge by adding an in-depth comparative analysis of several freedom of information acts (FOIAs) of other countries. This analysis should enable the Dutch government to assess whether the *Wet openbaarheid van bestuur* is 'future-proof' against the challenges. These challenges are part of three management and technology trends in public administration that explain how government transparency challenges (and opportunities) have got to create better laws.

The first trend is that there has been a shift in how citizens and policymakers think about 'openness'. In the digital age, storage and disclosure of government information is easier and cheaper. This has been accompanied by recognition that the rise of the Internet has made the status of information openness inevitable or imperative. Where, in the not too distant past, openness was the exception, nowadays secrecy is the exception. This change creates a permanent pressure on the government to reveal information.

A second trend of the digital age is the increasing permeability of organisational boundaries in information flow. The availability of online information has challenged our awareness of what is 'public' information, what is 'private', and how this balances with the responsibility of the government to be both efficient and fair in handing information about citizens. The reorganization of public and private issues, among other things, has consequences for "private organizations" operating in the public domain, such as health and education institutions, but also regulators.

A third shift of digitization is the capacity of information and communication technology (ICT) to automate multiple processes (decision making, but also transactions) at the same time, which leads to new type of government policy and information creation that require cost-benefit analyses.

The comparative analysis carried out in this research will explore the challenges created by these three shifts through the country case studies. The report first reviews academic literature on the topic, and develops analytical frameworks of digitization changes and open government that can be used to organize data collection based on three challenge areas: managerial, legal, and institutional. The literature review also provides evidence from prior work on what we might expect to find in the four countries, as well as a basis for explaining our findings at the end of the research.

1 Report prepared for the Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations (Netherlands). Tilburg Institute of Governance. Tilburg University, february 2018.

Literature review

Freedom of information and open government

What exactly are freedom of information and open government? According to Berliner and Erlich (2015, p.110), freedom of information laws aim to, "curb corruption and increase accountability by enabling citizens, journalists, civil society, and opposition politicians to access information about spending, procurement, policymaking, and other types of information from governments and public agencies." Public administration scholars place strong emphasis on access to information in a well-functioning democracy, and argue that is even a corner stone for human rights (Roberts, 2006).

Arguments commonly found in support of laws for freedom of information and open government are that (1) openness and transparency are necessary in a democracy; (2) that the civil service is the property of the people; (3) that transparency is owed due to tax investment by citizens; and (4) that public participation is impossible without knowledge of what goes on inside government. In contrast, arguments frequently used in opposition to freedom of information include that (1) freedom of information can negatively impact sensitive areas of government such as national security and internal parliamentary or cabinet confidence; (2) that personal privacy rights are inevitably impacted; (3) that public organisations lose efficiency; (4) and that the relationship between elected officials and civil servants becomes attenuated. According to Drapeau and Raciot (2010) the contours of these debates were laid down in very similar form during the 1970s when First World national governments began to evaluate the merits of formal legal systems to regulate information openness. Today, we still have these same debates about the value of access to information laws, but they have gathered a new sense of urgency and relevance due to the capacity of new information and communication technologies (ICTs). The growth of ICTs, and particularly, the speed and availability of information created by the Internet, have created a different kind of information environment, often referred to as the 'information society'.

Open government goes further than freedom of information in specific respects. Open government is a broader term that aims to incorporate a participative and interactive dimension to the value of transparency through information access, which is the proper purpose of freedom of information. According to Meijer, Curtin, and Hillebrandt's (2012) the idea of open government is captured by the dimensions of 'vision', whereby citizens and other stakeholders can obtain information, and 'voice', whereby information is an entryway to forms of engagement. They define open government as, "the extent to which citizens can monitor and influence government processes through access to government information and access to decision-making arenas" (p.13).

Table 1 shows how open government (What Nam (2015) calls Government 3.0) includes a broader range of government activities in areas of inter-organisational programs and improved performance of services. According to Nam, Government 3.0 is an initiative of government that applies forms of data-intensive services and information systems to efforts to make government more competent and service oriented, in addition to being transparent. These three different strategic directions are typically characterised by types of policies and programs. Table 1, gives examples of specific program areas that are matched to each of Nam's three strategic directions – transparent government, competent government, and service-oriented government. These program areas are typical of reforms focusing on bringing ICT innovations together with better vision and voice for citizens.

Table 1. Strategic directions of open government

Strategic Directions	Types of programs
Transparent government	Freedom of information
	Open data
	Public participation
Competent government	Inter-organisational collaboration
	Data analytics
	Crowdsourcing
Service-oriented government	Service reintegration
	Joined-up service provision
	One-stop shops
	Performance management

Most of these types of program initiatives revolve around the two concepts of access and communication. Access can be divided into two (active and passive, which are also called proactive and reactive) (Heretier, 2003). In order to function well in a pluralist democracy, FOI must connect popular control and organised interests to the agenda-setting and decision-making institutions of government by providing relevant types of information (Heretier, 2003). Information only becomes useful if public institutions evidence other dimensions of open government such as public participation and inter-governmental collaboration. Thus, this transition of reactive to more proactive forms of transparency relies on the other types of program listed in table 1 such as open data, crowdsourcing, or performance management systems.

The Internet-driven growth of ICT presses government to answer the question of how it will move beyond the "request and wait" model of reactive access to information policies. By virtue of technology, government agencies can now anticipate what information should be in the public sphere by default, which creates an entirely different philosophy and culture of open government. This shift was realized, for example, in the FOIA Reform Act in 1996 in the United States. But, in general, governments have been relatively slow to connect ICT capacity with a culture of proactive transparency. Table 2 lists a range of types of information that can be subject to proactive release (Saez-Martin, Caba-Perez, and Lopez-Hernandez, 2017). While many national governments do have proactive forms of information access enshrined in law, most categories of public information are not released in practice. Saez-Martin, Caba-Perez, and Lopez-Hernandez (2017) found that, of the 44 listed types of information, most governments manage just three or four types. The modal number is zero (including The Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, Latvia, and Sweden), and only two countries, Spain and Estonia, manage anything approaching half of the types of proactive release. It should be noted that this data is based on the content of the countries' laws, and compliance is a very different matter for proactive transparency as we go on to discuss later in this report.

Table 2. Types of information that should be considered for proactive release

Types of information	
1. Minutes of municipal sessions	23. Communication mechanisms
2. Decisions taken	24. Mission, goals and annual operative plan
3. Procurement of goods and services	25. Profile of staff positions, CV and selection process
4. Agreements	26. Plans and programmes currently being implemented
5. Announcements for staff hiring	27. Individual approved budgets
6. Compliance with the operative plan	28. Procedure for requesting information
7. Recipients, purpose and amount of non-returnable public funds	29. Programmes of grants, subsidies, etc.
8. Public debt, repayment date and repayments made	30. Appeals presented against the organisation
9. Implementation of the consolidated and individual budgets	31. Contact details of the person responsible for handling information requests
10. Public employees, positions held and salaries	32. Procedures for accessing public services
11.Organisation structure (officials responsible) and regulatory framework	33. Functions and regulation of competences
12. Application forms for services	34. Organisational structure (with functions)
13. Private/public audits	35. Guidelines, instructions and circulars
14. Statistical information on management results	36. Regulatory dossiers, reports and projects
15. Audit reports	37. Contracts signed: purpose, amount, procedure, number of tenderers, value of tenders offered and awarded and modifications
16. Report and indicators of annual activity	38. Withdrawal from contracts
17. Publicly-funded travel	39. Minor-sum contracts
18. Inventory of movable and non-movable assets	40. % budget for contracts awarded
19. Tendering and contracting (Identity of tender awardees)	41. Management delegations
20. Consolidated and individual financial reports	42. Profile of tenderers
21. Services provided	43. Senior posts: salaries, personal wealth, indemnities for dismissal/resignation and compatibility of private activities
22. Procedural manuals	44. Value of public grants and aim or purpose of public grants

Discussion

Our research and analysis of the digitisation and open government practices of four countries uncovered a range of different ways that high performing freedom of information regimes are coping with the pressures and opportunities of digitisation. The countries have diverse institutional, political, and demographic contexts, and they are all widely considered exemplary in their history of democratic modernisation and transparency. However, we have found that even these countries, while showing commitment to taking bold steps forward find problems when it comes to implementing and realising their goals. These problems take shape in terms of managerial, institutional, and legal dimensions. Like any area of public policy, agencies (and sometimes citizens in the case of Estonia) can be affected by lack of resources, lack of founding, lack of knowledge and skills, or lack of motivation or incentives. These challenges have profound effects on what can be realized in practice.

While governments can benefit from the economies of scale in records collection, management, and public access channels offered by digital means, the same pressures towards standardisation, inter-agency collaboration, and transparency bring gaps, duplication, un-standardized procedures, and organisational silos in different levels and policy areas of government into sharper relief. In this respect, each of the country cases offers different lessons because they have different types of challenges. In Estonia, while the X-Road infrastructure has given the government an effective platform for streamlining information management systems, it has also focused policy priorities on e-government services rather than transparency or open data. In the United States, federal digitisation strategy must proceed in an incremental and piecemeal fashion because agencies are used to creating their own coding and purchasing IT services independently. However, while the U.S. may struggle to adopt comprehensive restructuring policies of the type undertaken in Germany since 2012, there are some things that we can still learn from, especially in terms of the public awareness-raising, leadership, and incentivizing of agency policy and collaboration of the kind used by the Obama administration.

In table 4, the country cases are assessed in terms of their performance in digitisation and proactive information publishing (a complete version of this table with complete information to explain the assessment is in the appendices). Each country is appraised in terms of nine dimensions contributing to their overall strength in digitisation and proactive transparency capacity.

Table 4. Comparison of digitisation and proactive transparency capacity in four country cases

	Estonia	Germany	Norway	United States
Political system	PARLIAMENTARY	PRESIDENTIAL	PARLIAMENTARY	PRESIDENTIAL
Primary ATI law	STRONG	STRONG	STRONG	MODERATE
Primary ATI institutions	CENTRALIZED	CENTRALIZED	MODERATELY CENTRALIZED	DECENTRALIZED
Digitization policies/laws	STRONG	STRONG	STRONG	MODERATE
Proactive disclosure	MODERATE	MODERATE	STRONG	MODERATE-WEAK
Exemptions	MODERATE	MODERATE-LIGHT	STRICT	MODERATE

Treatment of privacy	MODERATE	STRONG	MODERATE	WEAK
Document definition	BROAD	BROAD	BROAD	BROAD
Monitoring and reporting	WEAK	MODERATE	MODERATE-WEAK	MODERATE

The countries are again reviewed in table 5, but this time by going into more depth on the qualities of their FOI laws using the six areas of good practice for proactive transparency from table 3. However, here the three main dimensions of digitisation and open government shifts are reprised for comparison of the challenges and strategies learned from country analysis. The good practice area of maximum disclosure concerns challenges in terms of institutional tensions between secrecy and transparency, as well as the sensitive legal area of privacy. Managerial challenges of maximum disclosure concern the inevitable technical skills and technologies needed to manage public organisations that publish internal documents by default. The good practice area of collaborative publishing presents challenges because public organisations frequently prefer to choose greater efficiency rather than investing resources in participation with civil society to develop better quality information and standards of publication. The good practice area of creating open data platforms is challenged by information silos among public organisations and problems with creating public value outcomes with open data such as accountability. Open data, like almost all areas of digital government also raises important questions about vulnerability to cyberattacks.

Table 5. Challenges and strategies in the six areas of good practice

	Challenges and strategies		
Good practice	**Institutional**	**Legal**	**Managerial**
Maximum disclosure	Assumption that secrecy is better approach to politics in the face of increased citizen demand for transparency. ***Example:*** *Estonia has an online registry (est.ee) where all agencies can publish information proactively though in practice they rarely do.*	Violation of privacy laws through release of personal information or sensitive linked data. ***Example:*** *Estonia uses a formula for assessing privacy risk where a minimum of 6 people is necessary to all some personally identifiable information to be published.*	Developing systems and training for automatic publishing of documents at the moment of creation. ***Example:*** *The United States uses a 3-requests rule for determining when requested documents should become permanently published online. The rule is not algorithm-based and must be monitored and checked by agency staff.*

			Example: *Estonian agencies place all requested information in their online registries.*
Collaborative publishing	Balancing trade-offs between efficiency and public participation. ***Example:*** *Germany's strategy for digital government and open government is guided by a working committee including federal and local government to find solutions that work across levels.*	Sharing data while protecting personal data from being published or commercialised without permission. ***Example:*** *Norway integrates data privacy principles across all ICT solutions. The assumption is that citizens can control the way their data is used at every stage.*	Training and building capacity of staff and organisations in network forms of collaboration with civil society.
Open data platforms	Information silos and divergent IT solutions across agencies. ***Example:*** *Estonia created the X-Road, a data exchange layer shared by all government agencies and companies that contract with government.*	Protecting private data from publishing or cyberattacks.	Building systems for open data driven public accountability, and identifying data uses with stakeholders. ***Example:*** *The Norwegian agency Difi uses the Electronic Public Records system (OEP) to publish emails and other internal documents that citizens and journalists can search to find valuable information about performance.*
Algorithm transparency	Cultural shifts toward systems-level approaches to organisation and policy design. ***Example:*** *Norwegian government agencies are required to submit daily*	Protection of equal rights and political and civil rights in the development of algorithms. ***Example:*** *The United States wants to develop algorithms that sorts information*	Training in legal and technical practices of algorithm creation as well as management of the digital publication platforms.

	metadata using standard codes that can then be organised and stored using algorithms developed by the National Archives.	*for publication while automatically excluding exempt information. This system has not yet materialised.*	
Education and outreach	Cultural shift towards ecosystems approaches to organisation where civil society and companies are viewed as partners in co-creating transparency. ***Example:*** *The United States created a Chief FOIA Officers Council to encourage proactive disclosure across all agencies while leaving specific decisions to agencies.*	Addressing the digital divide, digital access, and opportunities for all groups in society. ***Example:*** *Norway has published a digital strategy that commits digital government to be inclusive of all groups in society.*	Training in education and awareness programs for data analysis and transparency.
Performance management	Integration of proactive transparency as a core value of public organisations that should be measured and evaluated. ***Example:*** *The United States Chief FOI Officers Council receives audits on the performance of each agencies FOIA system every year.*	Measurement of performance in upholding data privacy rights.	Implementation of performance measurement systems and careful attention to learning loops.

Countering disinformation: a common endeavor

By Vincenzo Le Voci

INTRODUCTION

The plenary meeting of the Club of Venice foreseen on 7-8 June in Vilnius will focus on the cooperation among Member States and Institutions in tackling disinformation and exploring possible ways and means to develop comprehensive strategies in this regard.

BACKGROUND

Online platforms and other internet services have provided new ways for people to connect, debate and to gather information. However, the spread of news designed to intentionally misleading readers has become an increasing problem for the smooth functioning of our democracies, affecting peoples' understanding of reality.

The EU's longstanding endeavor to counter this phenomenon started in March 2015, when the **European Council** tasked the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to elaborate an action plan on strategic communication to address Russia's ongoing disinformation campaigns.

Extract from the European Council Conclusions on 19/20 March 2015 [1]:

"*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."

The Action Plan on Strategic Communication, presented by the **European External Action Service** (EEAS) in June 2015, has three main objectives:

- Effective communication and promotion of EU policies towards the Eastern Neighborhood
- Strengthening the overall media environment in the Eastern Neighborhood and in EU Member States, including support for media freedom and strengthening the independent media
- Improving the EU capacity to forecast, address and respond to disinformation activities by external actors.

The Task Force East set up to implement the EEAS Action Plan has worked closely with the EU institutions, Member States and a wide range of other partners, both governmental and non-governmental - within the EU, in the Eastern Neighborhood and beyond. The aim of this wide international cooperation is to share best practices in strategic communications and access to objective information, and to ensure support for independent media in the region.

This concept has been expanded by the EEAS, which applied it in the recent set up of two additional Task Forces (Western Balkans and South Europe) with the same objectives:

A key purpose of the **EEAS «StratCom East» Task Force** is to identify and compile what it believes to be false or distorted information or fake news and to alert media outlets, Internet users, and the general public of such disinformation. Moreover, it provides assistance to journalists and others to better identify such information. Each week the Task Force also publishes two reports:

- the Disinformation Review https://euvsdisinfo.eu/, which collects examples of pro-Russian disinformation all around Europe and exposes the breadth of the effort, including the countries and languages targeted
- the Disinformation Digest https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage_en/9506/Disinformation%20Digest, which analyzes how Russian media sees the world and follows key trends on Russian social media.

On 23 November 2016, the **European Parliament** (EP) adopted a Resolution entitled «EU Strategic Communication to Counteract Anti-EU Propaganda by Third Parties» [2], expressing its support to European Union efforts to counter propaganda and disinformation campaigns against the EU and its member states by Russia and non-state actors such as the Islamic State terrorist organization.

The abovementioned EP's resolution further supports the EU and its member states' efforts to address propaganda and disinformation from the Islamic State and other groups such as Al Qaeda. Such terrorist organizations having used disinformation to recruit European fighters for the conflicts in Syria and Iraq and to radicalize sympathizers who live in Europe.

Meanwhile, the EU has been working hard to counter terrorist ideologies, especially online, and to detect and remove Internet content that promotes terrorism or violent extremism. Measures include the launch in July 2015 of the EU's Internet Referral Unit (IRU) [3] within **Europol** (the EU's agency for police cooperation) to monitor terrorist content on the Internet and social media platforms and to work with service providers to flag and remove such content.

On 17 and 18 November 2016, the **European Commission** hosted its second Annual Colloquium on Fundamental Rights, on the topic of «Media Pluralism and Democracy». A Eurobarometer survey published on 17 November 2016 showed that European citizens were worried about the independence of the media, and levels of trust in media were low.

1 http://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/21888/european-council-conclusions-19-20-march-2015-en.pdf

2 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+REPORT+A8-2016-0290+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

3 https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/europol-internet-referral-unit-one-year

President Jean-Claude Juncker tasked Commissioner for the Digital Economy and Society Mariya Gabriel to look into the challenges the online platforms create for our democracies regarding the spread of fake information and to initiate a reflection on what would be needed at EU level to protect our citizens.

On 15 June 2017, the European Parliament adopted a new Resolution [4] on the online platforms and the Digital Single Market, calling on the Commission to analyze in depth the current situation and the legal framework with regard to fake news and to verify the possibility of legislative intervention to limit their dissemination and spreading.

In the 2nd semester of last year, the EU took indeed a stronger action in this field by implementing a number of key initiatives in a more structured way.

On 28 September 2017 the Commission adopted a Communication [5] with guidance on the responsibilities of online services providers regarding illegal content online, followed by a Recommendation on measures to effectively tackling illegal content online on 1st March 2018 [6].

In November 2017, the Commission DG CONNECT:

- launched a **public consultation** on fake news and online disinformation [7]. Citizens, social media platforms, news organizations (broadcasters, print media, news agencies, online media and fact-checkers), researchers and public authorities were invited to share their views until mid-February 2018, with the aim to help the EU provide citizens with effective tools to identify reliable and verified information and adapt to the challenges of the digital age. This exercise only addressed fake news and disinformation online when the content is not per se illegal and thus not covered by existing EU or national legislative and self-regulatory actions. The outcome of the consultation and a synopsis of the consultation are available on line [8].

  The outcome reveals, among others, that «there is a common perception amongst all respondents that fake news in general are highly likely to cause harm to society, in particular in areas such as political affairs, immigration, minorities and security»; that «fact-checking through independent news organizations and civil society organizations is considered the method that better contributes to counter the spread of disinformation online»; and that «a majority of citizens believe that social media platforms are not doing enough to help users to fact-check information before it is shared online».

- produced a **Flash Eurobarometer on Fake News and Online Disinformation** [9] to measure the perceptions and concerns of the European citizens around this topic. The results showed that fake news are widely spread across the EU, with 83% of respondents saying that fake news represent a danger to democracy.

- set up a **High-Level Expert Group (HLEG)** [10] representing academics, online platforms, news media and civil society organizations. The HLEG mandate included:
  * an analysis of today's trends
  * advising the Commission on scoping the phenomenon, defining roles and responsibilities of relevant stakeholders
  * grasping the international dimension and taking stock of the positions at stake
  * formulating recommendations that could contribute to the development of an EU-level strategy on how to tackle the spreading of fake news.

The declared common objectives were to:

- safeguard freedom to receive and impart information and the pluralism of the media, as enshrined in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights
- give citizens the tools to identify fake news, improve trust online, and manage the information they receive in an unconditioned environment, without being overwhelmed by disinformation, misinformation and fake news
- find a balanced approach between the freedom of expression, media pluralism and a citizens' right to access diverse and reliable information
- defend citizens' right to quality information, which as Commissioner Gabriel indicated, «*is a cornerstone of our democracies*».

The outcome of discussions within the HLEG (who met until early March 2018), together with the results of the public consultation and the Flash Eurobarometer, provided a very concrete basis for reflection and a strong impulse to the Commission work.

In its final report [11], the HLEG entered a set of recommendations aiming at providing short and mid term responses to increase societal resilience to disinformation:

- stressing the need for tackling the phenomenon in its multidimensional character, investing in research, media literacy, transparency and in a deeply cooperative framework linking with reliable stakeholders' platforms, news media and civil society organizations
- underlining that all digital media should provide the necessary information to help the reader to identify who is behind a certain type of information, and that platforms should display this information. [...] sponsored content should be clearly identifiable, same as information on payments to human influencers and use of robots to promote a certain message should be made available in order for users to understand whether the apparent popularity of an influencer is the result of artificial amplification or is supported by targeted investments
- calling, among others, for:
  * multiplying good practices "*backed by a structured cross-border and cross-sector cooperation involving all relevant stakeholders, in order to foster transparency,*

4 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2017-0272+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=GA

5 COM(2017) 555 final - https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/communication-tackling-illegal-content-online-towards-enhanced-responsibility-online-platforms

6 C(2018) 1177 final - https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/commission-recommendation-measures-effectively-tackle-illegal-content-online

7 https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/public-consultation-fake-news-and-online-disinformation_en

8 https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/summary-report-public-consultation-fake-news-and-online-disinformation

9 https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/final-results-eurobarometer-fake-news-and-online-disinformation

10 https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/experts-appointed-high-level-group-fake-news-and-online-disinformation

11 https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/6ef4df8b-4cea-11e8-be1d-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

algorithm accountability and public trust in media to an appreciable extent»
  * «*increasing European societies resilience through media and information literacy, digital citizenship, stronger independent news media, and digital debate free from interference from public authorities and powerful private actors*»
  * a concrete mobilization to «*safeguard diversity and promote sustainability of the news media ecosystem*» (actions in support of press freedom and pluralism, funding of projects supporting quality journalism, investing in research and innovation actions to improve technologies for online media services)
- relying on a number of actions at national level (no interference by public authorities with editorial independence, protection of fundamental rights, public support including in the form of State Aid).

The HLEG recommendations include:

- a proposal for a Code of Practices with the view to establishing a multi-stakeholders approach and facilitating a collective engagement process
- a road map that should accompany the key players until the European elections of spring 2019.

The HLEG did a very good job and significantly inspired the Commission's communication on tackling disinformation on line adopted on 25 April 2018 [12].

The Commission's new document looks ambitious and well structured.

The European approach proposed by the Commission to tackle this issue is based on the respect of four overarching principles: improving transparency, promoting diversity of information, fostering credibility of information and fashioning inclusive solutions. To this end, its communication indicates the following five focus areas :

- more transparency and reliability in an accountable online ecosystem (the need for online platforms that can operate more swiftly and effectively to protect users from disinformation; strengthening fact checking, collective knowledge and monitoring capacity on disinformation; fostering online accountability; harnessing new technologies)
- secure and resilient election processes
- fostering education and media literacy
- support for quality journalism as an essential element of a democratic society
- countering internal and external disinformation threats through strategic communication.

The main initiatives are:

- the set up of a multi-stakeholder forum on disinformation
- an EU-wide Code of Practice on Disinformation (envisaged as first output of the above forum)
- a study to examine the applicability of EU rules
- the creation of an independent European network of fact-checkers
- a secure European online platform on disinformation
- the use of the Horizon 2020 work programme and other sources to mobilise emerging technologies
- possible increase of funding opportunities to support initiatives promoting media freedom and pluralism, quality news media and journalism
- a call in 2018 for the production and dissemination of quality news content on EU affairs

A matter of concern could be the diverging opinions on the possible applicability of regulatory measures (in some experts views, this option could conflict with fundamental rights such as the freedom of media and freedom of expression).

The Council of the EU will analyze the Commission document and, depending on the presidency's calendar, may be working on draft conclusions within the year. Meanwhile, EU institutions and Member States must remain vigilant and stand ready to act together in order to counter disinformation in an efficient and coordinated manner. As far as the Council is concerned, this file may fall under the competences of different preparatory Working Groups (Audiovisual, Fundamental Rights, Information).

The Commission has expressly indicated in its communication its intentions to enhance cooperation with the EEAS and the Fundamental Rights Agency and extend its collaboration to other institutions and « *through an appropriate mechanism* » to Member States.

Meanwhile, the European Parliament is pursuing its analysis of the media pluralism and media freedom in the EU and, in its resolution of 3 May 2018[13], has, among others:

- recognized that "the new digital environment has exacerbated the problem of the spread of disinformation..."
- underlined "the responsibility of online actors in avoiding the spread of unverified or untrue information...".
- urged the Member States to edevelop their own strategic capabilities and engage with local communities in the EU and the EU neighborhood to foster a pluralistic media environment and to communicate EU policies coherently and effectively".

The Club of Venice has started tackling this issue on 17 March 2017 in London on the occasion of its StratCom seminar co-organised with the UK Government Communication Services (see specific references to countering disinformation and fake news in the London Charter [14] and pursued its analysis at its plenary meeting held in Venice on 23-24 November 2017 (*see the outcome in this number of Convergences*).

The follow-up discussion in the next plenary in Lithuania should lead to the adoption of a Vilnius paper which aims to facilitate dialogue and seek new synergies for more coordinated and effective strategies in this field.

12 COM(2018) 236 final - https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/news/communication-tackling-online-disinformation-european-approach

13 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0204+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN

14 Extract from the London Charter :
[...] To contrast the current threat to free communication and pluralism, they agree to multiply their efforts and seek synergies to contribute to the management and the solution of crises by:
[...]
▪ensuring support to the media and the organisations who are engaged in the defence of freedom of speech, pluralism and transparency;
▪neutralizing fake news to prevent public audiences' misperception and misinformation in today's post-truth actuality; [...]

STRATCOM – FOLLOW-UP TO THE LONDON CHA
CREDIBILITY, COOPERATION, EFFICIENCY

By Alex Aiken

We represent some of the most successful and democratic states in the world.

From Magna Carta to the principles of the French Revolution to the overthrow of the Soviet Union Europeans have sought liberty, democracy and equality before the law. Here in Venice a Republic and Parliament developed from the 8th century onwards. But Europe has also seen periods of repression and the loss of freedom so we must be ever vigilant. Good government, including the democratic use of communication has an important role in maintaining open, effective and trusted public administration.

In March of this year we gathered to set out our common values, committing to freedom, plurality, and transparency of communications across our partner nations. We committed to building resilience "in the face of growing extremism, nationalism, and populism", channelling our professional energies into safeguarding democratic values and processes.

As Theresa May set out in Florence in September, and again at her Mansion House speech in London, the UK remains unconditionally committed to maintaining Europe's indivisible security. The cooperation of the delegates here is a crucial part of this.

In the United States, the UK and across the EU and neighbouring nations, the phenomenon of disinformation continues to capture headlines – this is a growing threat which seeks to undermine our democracies and the values we stand for. As the Prime Minister said in her speech last week the UK will do what is necessary to protect ourselves, and work with our allies to do likewise.

Disinformation is a strategic tool designed to pollute our public's faith in democracy, government, media and the possibility for shared truth. In comparison to traditional hostile strategic communications - that have existed as long as mass communication has been possible - it does not seek to provide a coherent narrative contrary to consensus, but instead create lingering doubt. This is hybrid warfare in its purest form. I've heard about the use of these tactics against people and democratically elected governments in recent visits to Kiev and Vilnius. As the Ukrainian Foreign Minister has said: 'The world must wake up, better understand and unite against the threat of Hybrid warfare posed to the free world'.

The UK has a strong, plural media underpinned by freedom of expression and which operates free from government interference. Our Government is currently working with other nations to ensure they can reinforce free media. We are also working to help organisations identify examples of inaccurate and/or misleading information and build capability within their systems to address this problem. Some of the solutions to the threat can be found around Europe. I recently spoke to the Finnish government about the use of civic education. I've discussed with Lithuanian colleagues the use of a social movement – called 'digital elves' to combat misinformation from online 'trolls'. I commend the work of Jacob Yanda in Prague and the European External Action Service, but we must do more, together.

Russia is seeking to undermine the international system. This is not new news. The Kremlin uses a range of powers to pursue their policies – including propaganda and disinformation. As the Prime Minister recognised last week, it seeks to strategically weaponise information with its state-run media organisations in an attempt to sow discord in the West and undermine our institutions.

Russian authorities are quick to accuse us of having no evidence. But academics and researchers across our partner nations have noted Russia's open policy commitment to information warfare. From spreading conspiracy theories connecting NATO partners to Daesh, to inventing false atrocities in the Donbas, disinformation is a supporting pillar of Russia's hybrid warfare - that has seen the illegal annexation of Crimea, and the continuing loss of life in eastern Ukraine. In fact the evidence continues to mount. This week the Guardian newspaper reported that a Russian troll army was quoted 80 times in British media before their identities were revealed and they were banned by Twitter.

That is why we are driving reform of NATO so this vital alliance is better able to deter and counter hostile Russian activity, stepping up our military and economic support to Ukraine, strengthening our cyber security and looking at how we tighten our financial regimes to ensure the profits of corruption cannot flow from Russia into the UK. But as the PM has said, this is not where we want to be – and not the relationship with Russia we want. We do not want to return to the Cold War, or to be in a state of perpetual confrontation. So whilst we must beware, we also want to engage.

As we committed to in March, we must use this platform to reaffirm our cooperation with the EEAS, the ESCN, our domestic governments and NATO allies. The threat transcends borders, languages and governments, and requires a collective response. We must be clear in our recognition, condemnation, and confrontation of disinformation and work together to tackle it. We will also have to work closely with the social media companies.

RTER

The UN Secretary General spoke in London last week on need to win the fight on the internet to successfully counter terrorism. He praised the work of the British, French and Italian governments and the work of the 'Global Forum to Counter Terrorism' but said correctly that "we need to keep up the momentum".

Social media companies increasingly recognise their responsibilities to wider society – for example the Facebook 'Fake News' tool. We can work with them to educate users and identify lies, mistruths and fake news and reduce its impact. Government communication across Europe and in allied countries can influence this process by demanding that companies provide a safe, high quality and transparent digital environment for government information. The UK government is currently designing a new framework for advertising that seeks to incentivise best practice in this area.

But it is not enough just to condemn the opponents of a free society. We have to make sure that we set the highest standards in public communication. Government communication is 100 years old in the UK. Over that time we have learnt the importance of 'truth well told' and are bound by our code of practice to promote, explain and justify the policies of the government. Untruths and assertion would quickly destroy our credibility, a fact recognised by one of my predecessors in 1946, Kenneth Grubb, who said communication services: "are a recognition of a certain maturity in a democracy. They testify to a society where facts are essential to the formation of views, where prejudice is to be combatted by reason and where policies should be explained if they are to be understood". A shorter, but equally powerful explanation of the values of public communication was offered by JM Barroso, the 11th President of the European Commission who said that: "Integrity, initiative and interaction should be the hallmark of government communication".

The President of Estonia, addressing the Riga Strategic Communications dialogue in July demonstrated that properly delivered, strategic communication is a powerful tool for public good. She said that effective communication can ensure that government policy is clear, competent, credible and proof of good governance – all tools to fight fake news and disinformation. But to meet that goal we need to raise our performance to ensure in the President's words "an enduring relationship between the executive and the electorate".

If we are to meet the threat and create highly effective government communication characterised by integrity and credibility, I think that we should quickly undertake the following actions:

First, Recommit to the principles of the London Charter.

Second, define the ethical principles of public communication as a mission to inform, based on facts, justification and explanation.

Third, establish a standing working group of the Club of Venice to examine and report on these issues.

Fourth, support our government communication colleagues in central and Eastern Europe and the Balkans who face this challenge with practical help.

Finally, educate our ministers, officials and wider society on the nature of the threat.

On behalf of the UK government and our partners I look forward to bringing new evidence and solutions to this problem to future meetings of the Club of Venice.

Building a New European Spirit

Why European Society Is Drifting Apart – And What Comm

By Walter Osztovics

For many years the development of the European countries – EU-members as well as others – has led in only one direction: closer together. We have seen growing cohesion between regions of different economic strength. We have seen efforts by non EU-members to achieve closer ties and better relationships with the union. Exchange of goods and movement people between member states increased, and despite a lot of everyday quarrel the union seemed to proceed ahead.

Suddenly things have changed. Now we notice growing rifts and fissures in the fabric of our society. Different social groups are drifting apart. The European society is not a compact glacier anymore, but an assembly of floating ice sheets that move away from each other. That observation by a large number of experts is the main topic of the Arena Analysis 2018, a study conducted every year by Kovar & Partners, a Vienna based political consultancy firm. The 2018 issue is entitled "We and the others" and is based on in-depth interviews and written contributions by more than 50 experts.

The drifting apart of our society can be observed on several levels. It has become a growing problem for the EU, even if it is safe to say that 21 months after the Brexit-referendum there is no imminent danger of further exits. Yet the idea of an ever closer union has grinded to a halt, as well. The 27 members cannot agree on a common policy on refugees and migrants, on the crisis in Syria or on free trade with USA and South America. The current debate about the future budget shows that demanding "less Europe" has come in fashion again. More and more member states put "my country first", at least rhetorically. Concern for the common goals does not win voters at home, showing Brussels who's the boss, does. So nationalism is back in many forms.

Yet the nation states are not the winners of this change. On the contrary, many of them have come under pressure themselves: Regional autonomy movements, from Catalonia and the Basque region to "Padania" in northern Italy and Flanders in Belgium feel that they could do better alone, without the clumsy central state on their neck. They think they are different from the rest of the country and they are a homogenous unit. But they are not; they witness the same phenomenon of disintegration in form of a conflict between village and city. People in cities usually see things very different from people in the country. There is a growing alienation between urban and rural environments.

If you think that all this talk about regions and countries and environment is old school because we live in the age of the internet where anybody can communicate with everybody, regardless of place and time, you will be surprised to learn that online communities are drifting apart as well. The global village that we dreamed of does not exist, the world wide web is rather an assembly of tribes and interest groups that keep the others at distance. Users retreat into their echo chambers and filter bubbles, and woe betide the intruder who dares to post a dissenting opinion.

All these examples show that we are dealing with a paradox: The growing rifts in our society are caused by the fact that people try to huddle closer together. They seek security and maybe protection against the unsettling changes in the world around. So they close the ranks with their primary group and distance themselves from the others. By drawing a line at the outside they strengthen the ties at the inside. By constantly defining a common "us" and an alien "other" they find some stability, but they also aggravate the original problem.

What has caused their fear in first place? What is the reason for the feeling that openness poses a threat to them?

Three shocks in recent years are responsible for the fundamental changes in public attitudes. One was the financial crisis of 2008, which left us with the feeling that our society is helpless in the face of the untamed forces of globalisation. Turbulences at the financial markets can tear down whole countries like Greece. Spain and Italy were only saved by a hair's breadth. These events are still in the back of the heads of millions of Europeans, and many of them react by wishing to stay out of all future troubles of that kind. We are doing fine, and we don't want to be part of the next crisis, so please stay out of our front yard...

The second shock was the refugee crisis of 2015. The political scientist Ivan Krastev, author of the controversial book "After Europe" called this event "Europe's 9/11", since it was the moment when the continent realised that it is very vulnerable to developments that happen somewhere else in the world. The EU still does not know how to deal with migration and refugees, the issue divides the countries. While the financial crisis caused a north-south-divide in Europe, the migration crisis revealed a west-east-divide. East European countries refuse to take in any refugees and feel estranged by the fact that the west cannot understand why. They close their borders and loosen their ties to other countries, because that is a popular move and their governments get public support for this kind of politics. "We don't want to be part of that problem" again is the most common reaction to news of Syrians at the Greek border or Africans on boats at the Italian coast.

The third shock comes from digitalization. The digital revolution will bring new levels of automatization and threatens to erase a large number of existing professions. Yes, there will be new jobs in new fields that do not even exist today, but it is still unsettling to think that all my skills and my experience might be worthless in five or ten years and that I will have to learn something new from scratch. So far digitalization has brought many new high level jobs in IT and specialised maths, but also many low paid jobs like driving cars for Uber or delivering parcels of

unication Can Do About It

goods from online stores.

Digitalization causes new inequality and creates new divides in society. The new digital media are no help, as mentioned above. Only a few weeks ago former US president Barack Obama warned in an interview against the dividing forces of social media. He is afraid, he said, that we might witness a "Balkanization of society", using a somewhat outdated term from the 20th century, when the Balkans were a place of many isolated small countries that were constantly fragmented into even smaller countries, all of them at war with each other. If we rely too much on information from the internet we will end up living in fragmented realities, unable of any form of fruitful discourse. The danger there lies in the algorithms of internet sites, which monitor what we watch and read and provide us with something similar the next time. So the machines constantly narrow down our focus. Even if we do not willingly retreat into echo chambers, even if we do not use social media platforms at all we will be subjected to this narrowing of our minds caused by search engines and online media filters.

So what can be done? The idea of Europe as an ever closer union of states has come under threat, and there are strong forces that divide our society in times when cohesion and common action is needed more than ever. Obviously the mind-set is part of the problem: Our emotions tend towards closing the door to the outside and sticking together in ever smaller groups, while our objective interests would better be served by a stronger EU, by giving up more national sovereignty and doing more politics together. A problem like this is a task for communication, of course.

The time for talking about the achievements of the European Union has never been as favourable as now. Only five years ago many renowned economists predicted the downfall of the Euro by overstretching the capabilities of the European Central bank. Investors speculated heavily against the European currency. Well, they lost, and the economists were wrong. Spain has recovered, Portugal has recovered, the Greece economy is recovering fast, and even Italy is almost saved – even if the elections cause a lot of worries. But so far nobody has been heard to say: Without European solidarity, without the ECB and the bailouts we would not have survived. So we should make people talk about it. The way the crisis was handled may not have been perfect, but it turned out to have been successful. No European country, not even Germany, could have gone through the financial crisis on its own.

Talking about recent achievements is satisfying, but to win support for the European idea we have to talk about the future. The changes that are underway are of a global nature. So we need to be strong to confront them. A united Europe can be strong enough to deal even with worldwide monopolies like Google, Facebook, Amazon and Apple. We have entered a stage where we will need many new rules and regulations for new businesses that do not fit into existing moulds. The EU has shown that it can even force global firms to pay their taxes, so it should be able to draft laws that allow us to keep or present social and legal standards.

People how are worried about the future of the EU often say that the Union needs a new long term vision to replace the old ones. After building a strong economic community in the 1980ies, creating a common market and common currency in the 1990ies and incorporating the former communist bloc in the 2000s there seemed to have been nothing left but managing crisis after crisis. Now there is a new vision: The EU is the only plausible answer to globalization, digitalization and the problem of migration. It could become the driving force for the kind of cohesion that our society needs, the force to master the shocks that threaten to tear apart out society.

Walter Osztovics

is a consultant for public affairs in Vienna. He is managing partner at Kovar & Partners.

Walter studied communication and political science at the University of Vienna. Before he got into consulting, he has been working as a journalist for a number of newspapers and magazines in Austria, among them Kurier and Format. He also worked as East European correspondent for the German business magazine WirtschaftsWoche.

Walter is one of the authors of the Arena Analysis, a study that is conducted every year in cooperation with the Austrian newspaper "Der Standard" and the German weekly "Die Zeit". The Arena Analysis tries to identify and analyse emerging political issues at an early stage.

Reflections on the Open Government Netwo the European Citizens' Panel [1]

By ANTHONY ZACHARZEWSKI

Open Government in Progress

Two new networks were launched in Brussels in late May, looking at open government and democracy.

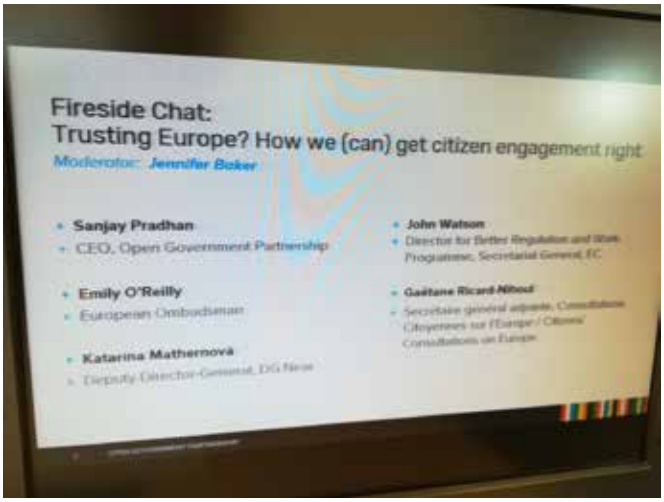
The **Open Government Network for Europe (OGNfE)** brings together civil society organisations, individuals and government bodies with an interest in development open government practice at the European scale. Hosted by the Open Government Partnership and the Democratic Society, the new network will join up practitioners and projects around Europe, and provide a place to discuss and develop accountability, transparency and participation in Europe.

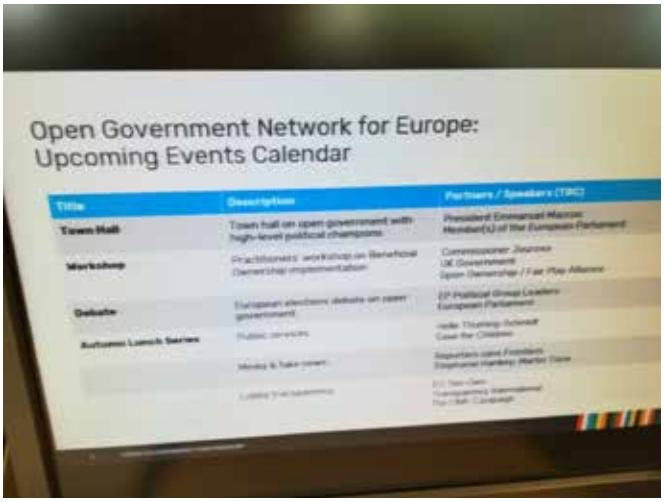
Speaking at the OGNfE launch on 22 May 2018, Sanjay Pradhan of the Open Government Partnership said that examples of good practice such as "Open Coesione" in Italy, participatory digital tools in Madrid and Paris, and constitutional reform in Estonia should be used as exemplars and inspirations for European and other national governments.

Emily O'Reilly, the European Ombudsman, said that the EU needed a network of champions to promote meaningful dialogue with citizens on issues they care about. Citizens needed help and good information, but most importantly the opportunity to engage in more that a vote every few years.

A workshop the following day was the first event for the new **European Citizens Consultation Democracy Network (ECCDN)**, hosted by the Democratic Society and the European Policy Centre. Bringing together democracy practitioners and researchers from around Europe the new network aims to support high quality citizen engagement in the new Citizens Consultations programme.

For more information on the Open Government Network for Europe, follow @opengoveurope on Twitter. For the Open Government Network or the ECC Democracy Network, contact Kelly McBride at the Democratic Society, kmm10@demsoc.org





ork for Europe and

European Citizens' Panel

Over the weekend (posted on 8th May 2018), The Democratic Society was involved in the European Citizens' Panel, run by the European Commission, with the support of Kantar Public (a market research agency) and Missions Publiques (a specialist citizen deliberation organisation). Bertelsmann Stiftung acted as academic experts.

We helped with the design and facilitation of the event, which ran from Friday night to Sunday lunchtime, and a group of facilitators from the civil society network that we are creating on the European Citizens' Consultation supported Missions Publiques with independent facilitation.

These are my first reflections – I'm sure there will more thorough research and reporting put out in due course.

What was the purpose?

The European Citizens Consultations (ECCs) are happening across 27 EU member states over the next few months. With original impulse from President Macron, they are designed to give a sense of what European citizens want for Europe's future, in advance of the European elections next year, and the mandate of the new Commission.

The ECCs are not a single thing. Each member state has said they will undertake them in their own way, and certainly some will do more and some will do less.

The central common element is a digital consultation being run by the European Commission. The Citizens' Panel that met over the weekend was intended to choose the themes and questions for that digital consultation. The French government had already said that they would use the themes that emerged as the core elements of their consultation approach, and others may do the same.

Who came?

Kantar Public, the market research agency who have the contract for undertaking the regular Eurobarometer survey, recruited a group of 96 participants from all 27 countries.

To ensure that each country could send a man and a woman, there wasn't an even distribution between countries. Many countries had two participants, none had fewer than two, and none had more than six. This meant that France, say, was comparatively underrepresented compared to Malta.

The participant selection was also designed to create an audience representative on gender, age, employment status and economic status. The recruitment plan was designed to ensure that representation was spread across the countries, so that, for instance, in country X Kantar Public's team would have to find a man under 30 who was employed and a woman over 65 who described herself as being under financial stress.

Participants did not have to speak English, or even understand it. In the final group, just over half said that they had some knowledge of English, but this varied widely between countries.

What was the setup?

We were hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee, who were unbelievably flexible, welcoming and supportive. Because the event was finalised at short notice, there were a lot of last-minute arrangements to sort out.

Because people had to express themselves in their native language, we used interpretation (the usual setup with interpreters in cabins and people wearing headsets that you've probably experienced, or seen on news reports if not).

The interpreters, who were giving up a bank holiday weekend, arranged the participants in groups so that everyone could speak in their native language and hear in a language that they understood (though not always their native language). With 22 languages spoken (the official languages minus Maltese and Irish) this was a multi-dimensional jigsaw puzzle but it worked – there were only a couple of people for a couple of sessions who needed someone with them to translate by whispering in their ear (chuchotage) rather than through the interpretation service.

The one inflexibility this introduced is that, because interpreters can't work in all languages at once, the distribution of the participants had to be fixed for the whole two days, there was no option of mixing and combining groups. Still, there was a good mix in each group – I don't think we had fewer than four nationalities in any of the rooms.

What happened?

We started with a blank sheet of paper. There was some talk beforehand of having a long list of topics that the EU worked on, or key themes that had come out of other engagement exercises like Eurobarometer, but it was thought best to start from zero.

After an introduction to the process and some icebreaking on Friday night, and a validation of the rules and confirmation that people understood the process the following morning, discussion started in groups.

Participants were asked to nominate topics that they would consider to be the main issues that should be asked to their fellow European citizens, in the context of a conversation on Europe's future. Each group was facilitated by an independent person, with a note-taker recording the issues and argumentation for each.

1 http://www.demsoc.org/2018/05/08/reflections-on-the-european-citizens-panel/

After 1h45 minutes of discussion, the topic lists were brought together by the facilitators and the six most frequently raised issues were marked as the "top six". These were:

- Education and Youth
- Equality, Fairness and Solidarity
- Environment
- Making rules and making decisions
- Migration and Refugees
- Security and Defence

These "top six" were then pinned – people could reopen them and continue the discussion on them, but they were noted as being significant topics that would be part of the twelve selected.

After lunch, participants were asked to continue their discussions with a prompt question, about what they think Europe will be like in 2040. The aim in this session was to enrich and deepen the list of topics from the morning.

Finally, before the plenary session at the end of the day, participants were asked to choose the two most important topics that they had discussed, excluding the "top six", and present those back in the plenary.

Each group presented back in the plenary session, and there was then a vote to select the "second six" to go with the "top six" to form the twelve topics for the citizen consultation. From the fourteen topics presented, similar ones were merged so in the end ten were voted on.

The vote was positive only (you could vote for but not against), and each participant was asked to cast no more than six votes. The electronic voting system in the Committee was not ideally suited to this voting setup, but we made it work after a couple of initial hitches and the topics and voting results can be seen below:

- Health/Quality of Life/Ageing Society (merged) – 86 votes
- Social Protection – 74
- Economic security – 67
- Maintaining the Union in a future crisis situation – 61
- Work/Technology/Employment and Technological Development (merged) – 55
- Agriculture/Fisheries/Food Security – 54
- Climate change – 47
- Local vs EU decision making – 46
- Size of the EU (states joining or leaving) – 45
- More or less integration of the states of the Union – 39

I was a little surprised that Climate Change and institutional arrangements didn't make the cut, but "Environment" and "How decisions are made" were already in the top six so presumably participants thought that the issues were sufficiently covered under that heading.

At that point the first day ended but each group had been asked to nominate one or two participants to take part in an evening session in which the group presented back to Kantar Public's question design experts. Had we had longer with the participants, this would have been a focus of a daytime session, but with just a weekend to work with, this had to be an evening one. The disadvantage was that the session had to be conducted in English, because there was no interpretation available, but this was a report-back session rather than one where anything was going to be decided.

The participant volunteers joined their group facilitators and Kantar Public, and fed back the key points of the discussion in their groups relevant to each of the twelve selected topics. They were supported by the facilitators' and note-takers' notes. Kantar Public's team (who had also been sitting in on the sessions) then asked questions for clarification, and explained how questions could be written to be open or closed, and how to avoid leading or biased questions.

The plan had been for Kantar Public's team to spend an hour drafting a first set of questions on the twelve topics, before presenting them back to the group for initial feedback, but the group presentations took longer than expected and Kantar Public had a lot of material to work on. Rather than presenting the questions back to the volunteers at 23:00, we brought them to the venue early and gave them first sight of them at 08:30 before the 09:00 start.

Kantar Public produced a long list of 39 questions, arranged under the twelve topics selected by participants. They merged "equality" and "social protection" to allow space for a set of cross-cutting or "transversal" questions that picked up on common issues arising.

In the original event plan, we had thought about giving each group one or two topics and asking them to choose one question from each to send to the plenary for approval, but on looking at the question list and thinking about the breadth of discussion the day before, we changed the plan on the Sunday morning and gave all the groups all the questions to consider.

This was the area where there was the most discussion in the facilitation team. Giving all the groups all the questions meant that every participant could express an opinion on everything and no-one would feel that they had been prevented from talking about, say, the environment. However, it was also a big workload for the Sunday morning, particularly since interpretation meant that the whole questionnaire draft had to be read to participants to ensure that they were able to hear it in their own language.

However, after considerable discussion, this approach was thought preferable to giving each group a subset of themes or issues, which would have increased their opportunity to go deeply into the questions, but (given that we couldn't rearrange the groups because of interpretation) prevented some participants from having a say on issues that they cared about.

In each group, participants were given ten votes to distribute among the 39 questions (one vote per question maximum). They were told that the target was for there to be at least three open questions in the survey as a whole, and one question on each topic.

The participants expressed some concern that the workload of 39 questions was too heavy, but the discussions did get under way and with a half hour extension on the planned time in groups, each group voted successfully.

The vote in each group was added together and the top question in each section selected. In the end, only two of the open

questions were selected and ten of the closed ones. On the basis that we needed one more open question, participants in plenary were given a vote between the two open cross-cutting questions, and chose the second of the two options as a thirteenth question.

Finally, participants voted to approve the list as a whole, and we had our twelve topics and our thirteen questions.

Thanks and reflections

It's worth recording here what a great piece of teamwork this panel was. Arranged at short notice, reworked as we ran it, it demanded and received a huge level of commitment from the Commission, from Kantar and its partners. I've never run a fully multi-lingual citizen panel before and although we had the immense benefit of the EESC and the interpretation service, there was a lot more discussion between participants than I had thought there might be. On some tricky issues dividing Europe, you could see those from countries with different political attitudes listening to and reflecting on each other's views.

Not everything worked. We needed more time than we had, for a start. Certainly another day would have allowed for deeper deliberation, or even running the event across two weekends – but the logistical upheaval of bringing people to Brussels for that would have been impossible.

The discussions were good but the slope of the decision making process (from blank sheet to final questions in a day and a half) was very steep. Participants were positive about the experience in the discussions at the end of the event, but I will not be surprised if the evaluation forms tell me that they found themselves rushed at certain points.

The questions, too, will need a little polishing, coming as they do from late night work by Kantar Public and being drawn from a very broad and diverse discussion. I don't know – I'm writing this before the questionnaire is released – how faithful the final version will be to what emerged on Sunday afternoon, but I hope it will be a very close correlation. Perhaps not every multiple choice will be the same but I hope to see the same fundamental questions, and the twelve topics that emerged.

The final contribution, from Commission DG of Communications Timo Pesonen, reflected that this was a very new experience for the Commission, who had run citizen dialogues before but never an event like this, designing a participation approach participatively. The door was very clearly open to more, and although there are lots of lessons on what to do and what not to do that we can draw from it, for a first time event, pulled together over the course of no more than a month, it feels like a success.

What's next

The real mark of success, of course, will be the impact of the European Citizens' Consultations and the themes that the participants came up with. We're talking about them, and this event, at the launch of the Open Government Network for Europe on 22 May, and you can sign up to join us there right now.

We're also, with our colleagues at the European Policy Centre, running a European civil society network on the Citizens Consultations, and if you would like to find out more, or share what's happening on the ECCs where you are, please let us know.

Thanks to Hannah Starman, Lena Morozova-Friha, Stephen Boucher and Marcin Gerwin for acting as facilitators, to Paul Butcher and Satguine Maison for taking notes, and to Corina Stratulat for her work in the core facilitation team.

Further Links

- https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/news-media/press-releases/first-european-citizens-panel-took-steps-enable-citizens-contribute-creation-future-europe
- https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/agenda/our-events/events/european-citizens-panel-future-europe

Anthony Zacharzewski is trying to make European democracy work. He founded the Democratic Society in 2006, and since 2010 he has led practical democracy projects and research from village councils to the European Commission. Recent and current project partners include the European Commission, the Open Society Foundations, the Scottish Government, the Serbian government, the Council of Europe, and the UK's Health Foundation. He is involved in numerous European networks including the Club of Venice, SEECOM, and the World Forum for Democracy's Democracy Incubator. From 1996 to 2010, he worked for the UK's Treasury, Cabinet Office, and Department of Health, and led the strategy function for the city of Brighton & Hove.

La communication européenne face à la dé

By Michaël Malherbe

Pourquoi la communication institutionnelle européenne est en train de s'éteindre ?

A bas bruit, plusieurs signaux faibles pointent dans la même direction, vers une communication institutionnelle des institutions européennes, celle qui s'intéresse aux valeurs et au projet global, en voie de disparaître. Pourquoi ?

La communication « corporate » de la Commission européenne phagocytée par les politiques

Entre l'échec relatif de la campagne publicitaire vendue en lieu et place d'une véritable communication corporate et la multiplication des dialogues citoyens en lieu et place d'une véritable stratégie, à force de jouer à faire et défaire, le jouet s'est cassé ; la communication institutionnelle, la vraie, de la Commission européenne n'est plus audible.

Songeons aux régressions autour de la plupart des missions essentielles normalement confiées à la communication institutionnelle, aujourd'hui dépossédée, au profit d'une communication plus politique, davantage incarnée mais plus court-termiste et risquée :

- La définition de l'identité de la Commission européenne n'est plus entre les mains de l'institution mais davantage portée à bout de bras par Juncker et son entourage proche ;
- Le développement de l'image auprès des différents publics est davantage conditionné par la visibilité des principales têtes d'affiche du collège des Commissaires que par la notoriété des programmes et actions portés par l'institution ;
- La défense de la réputation, là encore, s'est ramassée autour de quelques porte-parole démonétisés auprès des journalistes.

Au total, c'est tout le cœur de la communication institutionnelle, qui repose normalement sur des stratégies relationnelles dynamiques et constructives, entre les publics internes et externes, qui est défaillant.

Sachons que la spirale est malheureusement connue. Lors de son mandat avec la responsabilité de la communication, Viviane Reding n'a cessé d'associer communication et citoyenneté, un enjeu lié à son portefeuille de la Justice et des Libertés fondamentales, au point d'asphyxier toute autre forme de communication au sein de l'institution que celle conçue et délivrée auprès des citoyens. Le même schéma se reproduit, mais dorénavant avec Juncker, le président, qui en prenant en charge la communication, n'a cessé de présidentialiser tous les sujets traités par la DG COMM au point de sonner le glas de la communication institutionnelle, nécessairement plus discrète, plus besogneuse, mais au final plus soutenable et durable.

La chute de la maison Juncker devra être l'occasion de réinterroger les choix initiaux et les dérives constatées pour corriger une communication devenue trop verrouillée et top-down.

Ryan Heath de Politico Europe estime dans un podcast pour ESharp que la communication de la Commission européenne s'est améliorée, notamment la communication visuelle mieux illustrée et chiffrée même si la communication politique, plus (trop ?) présente est source de frustration pour les journalistes (et les autres publics !).

En somme, la communication de la Commission européenne doit élargir sa « licence to operate » en se rendant là où les conversations se déroulent, notamment dans les espaces publics nationaux tout en en intégrant davantage les publics. Seule une communication véritablement construire avec et pour les publics parviendra à convaincre.

La communication institutionnelle du Parlement européen aspirée par les élections

Autre institution, même interrogation. En effet, les prochaines élections européennes seront l'occasion d'une profonde transformation pour la communication du Parlement européen. En lieu et place de la traditionnelle campagne institutionnelle neutre et pédagogique d'incitation à participer au vote, destiné à convaincre les citoyens de se rendre aux urnes, la future démarche du Parlement européen, approuvé par son Bureau politique sera fort différente. L'institution s'est engagée sur la voie d'une communication plus partisane et pro-intégrationniste.

Sylvie Guillaume, Vice-Présidente du Parlement européen, justement en charge de la communication, explique lors d'une table ronde organisée par Touteleurope sur « Comment parler d'Europe ? » que « la communication du Parlement européen doit sortir de l'indistinction par rapport aux autres institutions européennes ».

La production des slogans et messages de la communication à l'occasion des élections seront rapatriés en interne et les groupes politiques y seront associés. Enfin, « la fonction majoritaire ira vers un message englobant », manière de dire que la campagne reflétera davantage la vision pro-européenne, partagée par les principales forces politiques.

Pourtant, la communication institutionnelle du Parlement européen serait indispensable pour parvenir à la fois à simplifier certains messages qui sont trop complexifiés, sur les actions et bienfaits de l'UE tout en parvenant à complexifier certains messages qui sont très simplifiés, en particulier sur les acteurs qui bloquent ou facilitent les dossiers européens.

Au total, il semble que les institutions européennes semblent faire le deuil de leur communication institutionnelle, sans doute convaincue à force d'avoir entendu qu'aucune institution n'était bonne pour parler au grand public. Mais, il est

ésillusion et au déficit civique

somme toute paradoxal de se laisser convaincre de guerre lasse par une idée reçue qui tourne en boucle. La communication institutionnelle européenne, la vraie, non dépossédée par la politique, mérite mieux ; et vite.

Intelligence collective : pour une institutionnalisation d'un panel de citoyens européens

Alors que le « tournant participatif » initié par le plan D – Démocratie, Dialogue et Débat par Margot Wallström remonte à plus d'une décennie, le train de l'innovation en matière de participation des citoyens à la gouvernance européenne semble passer une nouvelle fois, pour enfin s'institutionnaliser ?

L'innovation : un panel représentatif d'Européens débat et vote sur le questionnaire en ligne des consultations citoyennes européennes

Lors du premier week-end de mai, un panel d'une centaine d'Européens venus de tous les pays membres de l'UE (hors Royaume-Uni) s'est réunis dans les locaux du Comité économique et social européen pour débattre et adopter… à la quasi-unanimité la liste des 12 questions qui seront utilisées pour la consultation citoyenne européenne déployée en ligne à l'échelle de l'UE par la Commission européenne, selon le reportage de Touteleurope.

Le succès auprès des participants semble reposer sur la canalisation appropriée de la participation tant sur le périmètre circonscrit au questionnaire que sur les modalités maîtrisées de consultation, de traduction et d'animation : travail en groupe, séances plénières, rédaction des questions, débats…

La réussite sera confirmée par l'évaluation indispensable confiée à la fondation Bertelsmann afin d'« évaluer si chacun a eu une chance de faire entendre sa voix lors de la consultation, si celle-ci est transparente, si les participants sont représentatifs de la diversité de la population ».

La démonstration est d'ores et déjà acquise que la participation des citoyens, lorsqu'elle est mesurée – tant au sens de limitée à une finalité qu'encadrée par des règles – est techniquement et politiquement possible à l'échelle européenne.

L'institutionnalisation : un forum annuel de l'intelligence collective européenne

Dans le cadre d'un programme de recherche au sein de la fondation Carnegie Europe, Stephen Boucher publie une réflexion stimulante : « How Citizens Can Hack EU Democracy » visant à déployer de nouveaux dispositifs de participation pérenne des citoyens à la gouvernance européenne.

L'une de ses idées consisterait, d'une certaine manière, à institutionnaliser une sorte de panel d'Européens afin de les impliquer de manière ciblée dans les discussions politiques.

Sur le modèle du premier sondage délibératif à l'échelle de l'UE, Tomorrow's Europe, un sondage délibératif annuel pourrait être mené en amont des principaux sommets des Conseils européens et/ou éventuellement en amont du discours du président de la Commission européenne sur l'état de l'Union débouchant sur l'organisation d'un événement rassemblant à Bruxelles sur un week-end, dans les locaux du Parlement européen, un échantillon aléatoire de citoyens des vingt-sept États membres de l'UE afin de leur permettre de discuter des diverses questions affectant l'UE et ses États membres.

Ce concept présenterait divers atouts en termes de promotion de la participation démocratique aux affaires européennes :

- Pour les institutions européennes, cela leur permettrait de développer leur capacité d'écoute des citoyens, et surtout de mieux comprendre comment se forgent et éventuellement évoluent des opinions sur l'Europe en fonction des informations portées à la connaissance des citoyens ;
- Pour les citoyens, cela leur fournirait une tribune afin de dialoguer en étant préalablement informés et donc de mener une délibération de qualité, reflétant des préférences qui peuvent évoluer en fonction des dynamiques collectives ;
- Pour les décideurs européens, cela leur donnerait un aperçu de ce que les gens pensent vraiment réalisable grâce à un effort de collaboration ;
- Pour les médias, cela pourrait leur offrir des éléments, à échelle humaine pour traiter les affaires européennes.

Un tel format de sondages délibératifs afin de produire une intelligence collective européenne lorsqu'il est bien fait et utilisé à bon escient en mutualisant les ressources des institutions européennes, ne serait pas tant prescriptif que quasi méthodologique pour faire avancer l'Europe.

Au total, le panel des citoyens pour rédiger le questionnaire des consultations citoyennes européennes devrait représenter la première étape d'une institutionnalisation de la participation citoyenne au service de l'intelligence collective pour la construction européenne.

Une campagne de communication peut-elle sauver l'initiative citoyenne européenne ?

Largement méconnue et donc sans impact, l'initiative citoyenne européenne, pourtant l'innovation de démocratie participative la plus originale et potentiellement disruptive fait l'objet d'une campagne de communication. Mais n'est-ce pas bien trop tard, ou finalement encore trop tôt ?

Une campagne pédagogique tellement indispensable… bien trop tardive

« Prenez l'initiative » : EUtaketheinitiative.eu est la campagne de communication – tant attendue depuis la mise en œuvre de l'initiative citoyenne européenne… en 2012 – lancée par la Commission européenne.

« Mieux vaut tard que jamais » diront les optimistes, qui se réjouiront également de trouver tous les éléments nécessaires pour faire connaître l'initiative citoyenne européenne et encourager les citoyens à y participer, notamment une FAQ très utile.

Une campagne d'empowerment tellement souhaitable… encore trop prématurée

Mais, puisque « tout vient à point à qui sait attendre », n'aurait-il pas été préférable de faire les choses dans l'ordre, à savoir, réaliser d'abord la réforme promise depuis des années, et finalement lancée l'année dernière puis ensuite communiquer sur l'initiative citoyenne européenne simplifiée.

Inviter des citoyens à s'engager dans une initiative citoyenne européenne, comme le propose le site « Votre idée peut-elle faire l'objet d'une initiative ? », n'est, disons, pas un parcours de santé dans l'état actuel des procédures, voire, dirons certains, contre-productif.

En somme, la communication autour de l'initiative citoyenne européenne est non seulement pas dans le bon timing, mais surtout, cette campagne démontre que les institutions européennes ne semblent pas comprendre que la communication ne peut pas tout, et qu'elle peut encore moins lorsqu'elle est à contretemps.

Au total, il reste à souhaiter que le temps que la médiatisation autour de l'initiative citoyenne européenne atteigne le grand public, sa réforme sera adoptée pour tirer tous les bénéfices de la campagne de communication.

Initiative citoyenne européenne : de la promesse participative au clicktivism désaffecté

Entre la théorie et la pratique, Marie Dufrasne analyse les nombreux débordements de l'initiative citoyenne européenne : réinvention des pratiques, hybridation de la participation, désillusion de la délibération, résignation au clicktivism et désaffection des mobilisations…

La magie de la théorie

Les promesses de l'initiative citoyenne européenne correspondant à une « constitutionnalisation » d'un modèle participatif sont séduisantes :

- Le premier outil transnational d'agenda-setting pour le citoyen permettant à chaque ressortissant des États membres de déclencher le processus législatif de l'UE ;
- l'introduction d'une revendication collective, sans surveillance, dans le processus décisionnel européen ;
- La possibilité de discours supranationaux dans un espace public européen émergent.

En bref, un tel dispositif fournit exactement ce qui fait le plus défaut à une politique quasi transnationale comme l'UE aujourd'hui :

« *Un dialogue intense entre les institutions et les citoyens, un sentiment d'appropriation de la politique européenne par les électeurs et une solide légitimité pour les décisions prises au niveau de l'UE. Le pouvoir d'initiative conféré aux citoyens permet de briser le privilège exclusif de la Commission européenne de définir l'intérêt communautaire.* »

Pourtant, ces premières déclarations ne résistent pas aux observations des pratiques de terrain.

Réinvention des pratiques : le hacking du dispositif institutionnel de participation citoyenne

Avec « La participation citoyenne européenne au travers des pratiques de l'Initiative Citoyenne Européenne », Marie Dufrasne détaille les pratiques de contournement et de réinvention : Un des résultats les plus intéressants est de mettre au jour des formes très créatives et militantes de contournement ou réinvention du dispositif.

Face aux énormes difficultés (juridiques et techniques), les acteurs, pour pouvoir continuer à participer dans un cadre excessivement contraint, font preuve d'usages actifs et innovateurs : réticents quant aux normes imposées par la Commission qu'ils estiment relever d'une participation pauvre, ils vont dès lors mettre en place des opérations décalées par rapport à la définition initiale du dispositif, vont tenter de le transformer, l'adapter ou d'en déborder, de le détourner, vont en donner une définition différente et vont même parfois créer un nouveau dispositif.

Hybridation de la participation : un genre participatif ambigu

Avec « The ECI as a Hybrid Participatory Genre », Marie Dufrasne montre que les termes utilisés par les autorités dans les discours officiels, les praticiens, la presse et les universitaires peu-

vent conduire à une ambiguïté terminologique, des attentes dissemblables et une confusion dans les usages.

Du coup, ces différences de sémantique conduisent finalement à un type hybride et ambigu de participation, combinant trois genres existants : initiative, pétition et campagne, où la dimension campagne prend le pas sur l'intention politique.

Désillusion de la délibération : une délibération désillusionnée au niveau européen

Avec « The European Citizens' Initiative : towards more deliberation at the European level? », Marie Dufrasne analyse que l'initiative citoyenne européenne fournit très peu de délibération en dehors du comité des organisateurs définit dans le cadre du dispositif institutionnel en soi. Dès que l'initiative est enregistrée, il n'y a plus de débat, l'objectif étant de collecter des signatures.

Cependant, la délibération est présente via des communautés qui se consistent autour de comités et de partisans d'une initiative dans le cadre de campagnes de sensibilisation et de mobilisation, en dehors de tout processus formel.

Les désillusions liées à la Commission européenne qui ne semble pas encore avoir mesuré les enjeux politiques de sa communication sont fortes, surtout en raison de la façon très décevante dont la Commission réagit aux initiatives réussies, qui devrait être considérée à la lumière de l'ampleur de ce dispositif et des efforts qu'il exige de ses organisateurs.

Un autre risque est la déception des citoyens dans un dispositif exigeant mais non contraignant. Si la Commission ne réagit pas, elle aura les effets opposés de ceux qui sont prévus : cela ne fera qu'accroître le sentiment d'impuissance des citoyens européens dans le processus décisionnel et finalement renforcer les sentiments de méfiance à l'égard des institutions européennes et aggraver la crise de légitimité de l'Union.

En somme, cet instrument très exigeant et limité donne l'impression que la Commission a peur des débats politiques et des conflits alors que les contestations citoyennes contribuent à la politisation de l'UE et favorisent l'européanisation de la sphère publique.

Résignation au clicktivism : une participation réduite à la mobilisation en ligne

Avec « The European Citizens' Initiative (ECI). Online participatory practices used to bypass traditional impediments to pan-European activism », Marie Defraisne étudie l'initiative citoyenne européenne sous l'angle des évolutions dans la relation des citoyens à la participation, notamment par une utilisation accrue des pratiques en ligne.

Au sein de chaque initiative, la collecte de signatures n'est qu'un élément d'un plan plus large d'actions légales ou symboliques poussant les acteurs à l'inventivité, au renouvellement des pratiques, au développement de répertoires plus vastes, à l'utilisation de moyens différenciés.

La communication vise principalement à faire campagne pour recueillir autant de signatures que possible. Il s'agit d'être connu et de se rendre visible, de développer et transmettre des informations, et de mettre en place une communication d'influence.

La communication est un élément central des pratiques et devient même parfois un but en soi, avec la préséance sur le reste, transformant l'action en une véritable campagne. La communication subsume alors tous les types d'actions que les participants mettent en place. Devenir visible et communiquer peut même être l'objectif principal d'une initiative en créant des sites internet, en étant présents sur les réseaux sociaux, en organisant des événements pour attirer la presse, en développant des slogans et des messages à diffuser auprès du grand public.

Déjà que l'idée militante est emballée par la réglementation, le dispositif technique essentiellement numérique vient finir de la transformer en slogans concis et accrocheurs.

Au total, les pratiques de communication révèlent une résignation en passant du militantisme au *campaigning* et en les poussant à promouvoir le *clicktivisme*, tout en reconnaissant que ce n'est pas ce qui était attendu de la participation citoyenne au niveau européen.

Désaffection des mobilisations : un contrôle des affects

Avec « Les débordements d'un dispositif participatif institutionnel : comment l'Initiative Citoyenne Européenne impose aux participants de contourner un contrôle maximal des affects », Marie Dufrasne illustre que les contraintes juridiques et formelles, extrêmement cadrées, pèsent sur les participants et laissent peu de place à l'expression des affects.

La norme de rationalité conduit la plupart du temps à disqualifier tout autre registre mobilisé pour justifier des positions dans le cadre des institutions européennes, exigeant, en particulier un contrôle minimal des affects.

Les promoteurs disent se sentir obligés d'élaborer des propositions raisonnables et de se plier à des pratiques en adéquation avec la manière de fonctionner de la Commission pour pouvoir être considérés.

Ce qui est extrêmement paradoxal mais tout à fait intéressant, c'est la coexistence de cette vision de ce que devrait être l'initiative citoyenne européenne et l'Europe avec une déception extrême vis-à-vis de ce qu'elles sont réellement. Puisqu'il faut passer par l'institution pour changer l'institution, les acteurs acceptent de prendre part à un dispositif d'une institution qu'ils critiquent fortement dans une forme de « coopération conflictuelle ».

Conclusion : dépolitisation et désidéologisation ?

Certes, la proposition politique à l'origine d'une initiative citoyenne européenne doit être traduite en une proposition législative concrète au point que l'idée politique initiale est souvent diluée au point de devenir presque apolitique.

Mais, plutôt qu'un mouvement de dépolitisation et de désidéologisation, l'initiative citoyenne européenne, dans une dynamique de coopération conflictuelle conduit à une reconfiguration des formes de démocratie participative et de mobilisation des citoyens et de militantisme au niveau européen avec de nouvelles pratiques participatives et communicationnelles, d'autant plus à l'heure de la transformation numérique.

Les consultations citoyennes européennes peuvent-elles réduire le déficit civique de l'UE ?

Officiellement lancée par le président de la République française à Epinal mardi 17 avril, les consultations citoyennes, qui disposent d'un site officiel « Quelle est votre Europe ? » font débat. Quelles sont les principales recommandations pour tenter de réduire le déficit civique de l'UE ?

Faciliter l'appropriation des citoyens : aller au-devant de tous les publics, dans leur vie quotidienne

Pour Valérie Gomez-Bassac, députée LREM, auteure du rapport d'information sur « les conventions démocratiques de refondation de l'Europe », pour toucher la population silencieuse, il faut aller dans leur quotidien pour sortir des cercles des sceptiques ou des convaincus.

« *Les individus doivent s'approprier ces consultations : si celles-ci concernent des domaines d'activité précis, les personnes se sentiront concernées. Allons donc dans leur quotidien, parlons de leurs passions, de leur activité professionnelle, de leur vie personnelle… elles verront alors ce que l'Europe leur apporte, elles diront ce qu'elles attendent de l'Europe, et elles nous feront éventuellement des remontées.* »

Pour Chantal Jouanno, présidente de la Commission nationale du débat public – qui n'a pas été consultée selon La Croix – plaide pour la multiplication des approches afin d'aller chercher ceux qui sont loin de l'Europe : « débats mobiles dans des trains, bus qui se déplacent dans les quartiers populaires, tirage au sort de citoyens pour réfléchir au sein d'un « G400 », « ateliers de controverse » avec des experts… ».

Autrement dit, l'accent doit être mis sur l'accessibilité et l'ouverture du débat à tous les publics dans une démarche, selon l'expression dorénavant consacrée de « bottom-up » pour partir du terrain en multipliant les points de contact inattendus mais signifiants.

Réunir les deux conditions indispensables au débat démocratique : l'indépendance et la transparence

D'une part, il s'agit de clarifier la place et le rôle du gouvernement, comme le précise la présidente de la Commission nationale du débat public : « il convient de faire en sorte que l'organisateur ne soit pas le décideur, sans quoi il y aura toujours un défaut de confiance de la part des opinions divergentes ».

A mesure que les médias généralistes se saisissent du sujet, une certaine confusion s'entretient entre d'une part, la démarche partisane autour de la grande marche pour l'Europe organisée par la République en marche et d'autre part, les consultations citoyennes soutenues par les pouvoirs publics. Sous cet angle, les efforts de transparence et d'indépendance doivent être renforcés pour crédibiliser la démarche et lever le moindre doute.

D'autre part, Yves Sintomer, professeur de sciences politiques, spécialiste des questions de démocratie participative, interrogé par La Croix, regrette que le principe des consultations est « en retard sur les désirs mais aussi sur une série de pratiques » (…) « n'aboutissant pas à de réelles transformations, elles risquent en outre de renforcer au final la défiance. Et de donner aux citoyens l'impression qu'une fois de plus, ils sont consultés pour que rien ne change ».

S'inspirer des modalités participatives qui réussissent

Selon Yves Sintomer, plusieurs exemples devraient servir d'inspiration pour la démarche de démocratie participative européenne :

- Faire participer des citoyens éloignés de la politique via des Assemblées tirées au sort, à l'instar de l'Irlande pour la révision de sa Constitution ;
- Engager des citoyens organisés via des réunions publiques sur quelques thèmes européens centraux, à l'image du Grenelle de l'environnement en France ;
- Donner un autre souffle au droit d'initiative européen, à l'exemple des votations référendaires directes, à valeur décisionnelle, comme en Suisse, en Californie ou encore dans certains Länder allemands.

Réussir la restitution : le point de départ

Dernier enjeu, clé pour la plupart, la restitution, selon Marie Dufrasne, de l'université Saint-Louis de Bruxelles, experte de la démocratie participative dans l'UE, doit faire l'objet d'un investissement afin de « faire un retour rapide vers les citoyens (avec justifications) pour qu'ils comprennent les points qui sont retenus, ce que les autorités vont en faire, etc. Sans cela, il y a un risque de déception immense. »

Cela doit se traduire notamment sous l'angle des efforts de communication qui devront être équitablement répartis entre les différentes phases de la consultation, que ce soit du recrutement des participants en amont à la restitution en aval.

Institutionnaliser la consultation autour de panels et forums délibératifs

Pour Yves Bertoncini, dans « Transformons l'essai des consultations citoyennes sur l'Europe », les institutions devraient recourir « plus systématiquement à des panels citoyens ou à des forums délibératifs réunissant un échantillon représentatif de Français ou d'Européens » en amont des grands choix et votes opérés par l'UE.

Au total, les recommandations sont particulièrement éclairantes pour mesurer le potentiel et les risques des consultations citoyennes européennes, qui se tiendront jusqu'à l'automne.

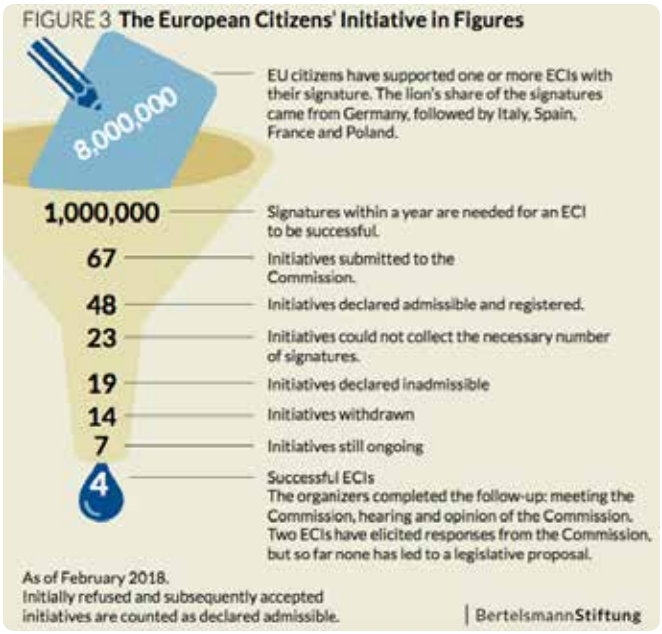
Initiatives citoyennes européennes : bilan chiffré des résultats et de la visibilité médiatique

Enfin, un bilan consolidé des résultats et de la visibilité médiatique des initiatives citoyennes européennes est réalisé par le think tank Bertelmann Stiftung (Policy Brief + Factsheet)...

Bilan chiffré des initiatives citoyennes européennes : huit millions de signataires, zéro impact législatif

Avec une moyenne de 8 projets enregistrés chaque année, le bilan des initiatives citoyennes européennes est dramatique.

Certes, 8 millions de citoyens ont signé une ou plusieurs ICE. Néanmoins, seulement 4 des 48 initiatives enregistrées ont réussi à recueillir le million de signatures requis. La Commission a répondu à toutes les ICE réussies ; mais, à ce jour, aucune initiative citoyenne n'a été directement transposée dans un acte législatif.



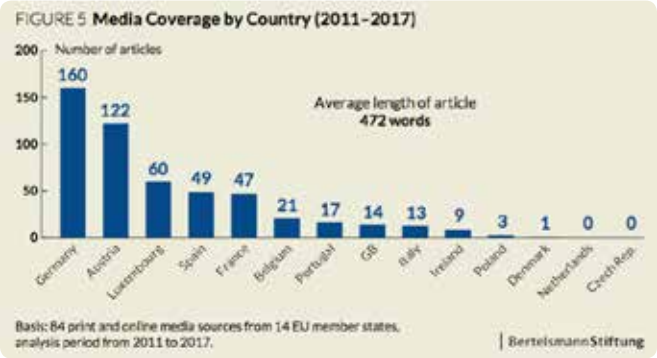
En dépit des nombreux obstacles sur le parcours, les initiatives citoyennes européennes demeurent un instrument dont le potentiel est encore largement sous exploité. Le bilan qualitatif montre que les conditions du succès résident autant dans le choix d'une thématique mobilisatrice, donc indirectement d'une audience de supporters potentiels prédéfinies que dans les ressources financières et les compétences de campagne des organisateurs.

Au total, l'initiative citoyenne européenne apparaît davantage comme un instrument pour les citoyens organisés, en d'autres termes, pour la société civile organisée.

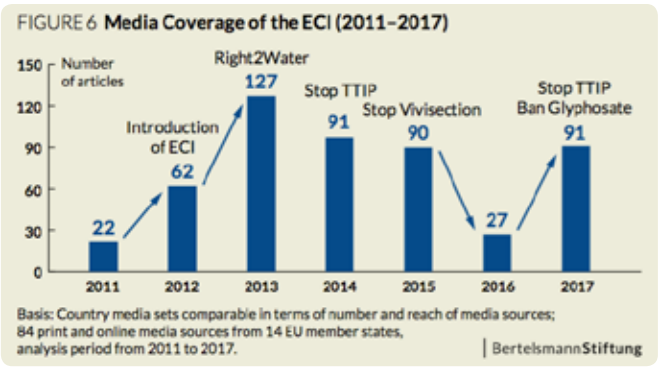
Visibilité médiatique des initiatives citoyennes européennes : 500 mentions, 500 fois moins que la Commission européenne

Une visibilité médiatique des initiatives citoyennes européennes quasi inexistante : entre 2011 et 2017, seulement 516 mentions dans 14 pays et 84 sources, soit un peu moins d'un article par an et par média.

Une visibilité très différenciée selon les Etats-membres : la plus grande couverture médiatique de l'initiative citoyenne européenne enregistrée en Allemagne, au Luxembourg, en Autriche (représentant ensemble plus de 50% de toutes les mentions) tandis que presque totalement ignorée dans de nombreux États membres d'Europe centrale et orientale, ainsi qu'en Irlande, au Danemark et aux Pays-Bas.



Une visibilité significativement différente selon les initiatives citoyennes européennes au fil du temps : après l'introduction en avril 2012, la couverture médiatique s'accélère sous l'effet de la nouveauté, puis elle devient étroitement liée aux initiatives réussies. « Right2Water » en 2013, « Stop TTIP » en 2014 (qui a été interrompu pour des raisons formelles); « Stop Vivisection » en 2015; et les deux initiatives « Stop TTIP» et « Ban Glyphosate » en 2017.



Une visibilité médiatique plus forte pour le déficit démocratique de l'UE : Près de neuf fois plus de mentions sur le déficit démocratique de l'UE que sur l'initiative citoyenne européenne.

FIGURE 7 **Media Coverage of ECI/Democratic deficit (2011–2017)**

Basis: Country media sets comparable in terms of number and reach of media sources; 84 print and online media sources from 14 EU member states, analysis period from 2011 to 2017.

BertelsmannStiftung

Ce qui frappe, c'est que les résultats d'une initiative citoyenne européenne ne jouent pratiquement aucun rôle dans la couverture médiatique. Non seulement, l'audience liée aux signatures collectées ne semble générer presque aucune publicité dans les médias. Mais en outre, la valeur ajoutée de la couverture médiatique est décevante pour les initiateurs pratiquement invisibles aux yeux du public, pourtant susceptibles de donner un visage à leur campagne.

Au total, la couverture médiatique des initiatives citoyennes européennes, très maigre contribue à une prise de conscience de base, surtout pour s'opposer que pour proposer, sans effet de mobilisation via les médias et sans effet de bord transnational.

En conclusion, quoique le bilan, comme on pouvait s'y attendre, est particulièrement négatif, ses enseignements sont d'autant plus impératifs.

http://www.lacomeuropeenne.fr/

Michaël Malherbe is Manager at Burson-Marsteller, 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. Since 2007, he has managed the blog "Décrypter la communication européenne": www.lacomeuropeenne.fr

EUROPEAN CONSTRUCTION CHALLENGES: HOW TO COPE WITH THEM TOGETHER

By Piervirgilio Dastoli

On March 25, 2017, with the Rome Declaration and the mobilization of thousands of European's citizens, some political opportunities came into existence. They need to be seized quickly. Political parties, economic and social partners, and civil society's organizations are urged to take full responsibility.

Opening once again the debate on the European construction appears more and more necessary because of the Brexit horizon and its consequences; because of the talk regarding the possible integration of the *Fiscal Compact* within the Treaties or in the European laws (with many proposals still on the table that need clarification from the European Commission); because of the Eurozone governance reform, and because of the update of the financial system of the Union, regarding both revenues and expenditures. The latter considers the suggestion of the European High Level group on resources, and the most recent communications of the Commission in this field, while, at the same time, maintaining the goal to contribute to a stable economic growth.

The ongoing economic crisis that has struck the Union made necessary a reform of the entire European system, which had been defined more than sixty years ago, the objectives of which had never been fully reached. Moreover, new crisis scenarios have added more uncertainties and a general feeling of instability, as well as an increasing lack of confidence in the EU's added value and in its institutions. New challenges that Member States are unable to face alone.

In order to overcome the sovereign and neo-nationalists' threats that besiege Europe, it is therefore necessary to reform the European system, to strengthen federal enlightenment and democratic legitimacy.

A twenty-year long cycle came to an end, marked by globalization ruled by liberal policies that had no rules, and by the longest and deepest economic crisis the world has ever known. The crisis created both vertical and horizontal inequalities. Horizontal among social classes, because wealth has been redistributed at the detriment of jobs, of the middle class, and of young people. Vertical among nations, where the same mechanism allowed stronger economies to create further depletion.

That's a structural, long-term issue that must be solved.

No variation of the institutional construction must be excluded, regarding both the method and the content of the projects. In this framework, the Eurozone Member States and those that committed themselves to join the Euro must represent the forefront of complete political integration to realize a federal Community.

Of course, it is a matter of the utmost importance to attain the goals defined by the Treaties, but it must be taken into consideration that the inadequate division of competences between the EU and Member States does not provide the instruments necessary to act at European level.

It is necessary to clearly define the essential elements of the European project, method, and agenda, opening the European construction to the layman, turning it into a public space made to widen Europe's public knowledge and to complete supranational democracy.

The European system, with its mechanisms and its liturgies, shows already several inconsistencies. Many of these derive from its initial imposition, that has never been truly overcome through the many subsequent changes made to the Treaties, and has led Europeans to doubt the real democratic legitimacy of the Union. Yet more inconsistencies have been made clear, in

recent years, through the economic, social and political crisis: a devastating sequence of crisis that has struck Europe.

Urged by necessity, in order to face the emergence and solve the crisis, the European Council has progressively empowered itself with most of the decisional power, overstepping the boundaries set for it in the Treaties, without being able to face today's challenges. In this unsatisfying Union, it has thus been established an allocation of responsibilities different from what it is set in the Treaties, yet still inadequate.

The usual method, that prioritizes agreements among governments, doesn't seem to be suitable anymore, and it won't be suitable in the future. At the same time, the convention method doesn't address the need for a transparent and participative reform, since it is convened without a real European debate.

To define Europe's future, it will be necessary an articulate debate involving citizens, opinion movements, intermediate bodies at European level, social partners, and political parties; a debate that will stimulate national governments and Parliaments, regional assemblies and the European Parliament, and communicate through parliamentary delegations.

An extensive discussion is necessary, without avoiding the confrontation with euro-critics. It is paramount to guarantee the best and most extensive informative action, both on method and content.

It is basically impossible to reach this goal amending the existing Treaties, because that would require a unanimous agreement of all the governments of the member States of the European Union, and the ratification of the amendments – parliamentary or through referendum – in all the States.

Furthermore, this process would involve States that haven't made the choice to make their economies interdependent, unify the monetary policy and accept common rules, denying their consensus to essential principles regarding citizenship, rights, mobility and solidarity.

For these very reasons, the best path to follow would be to start a constituent phase for a united, liable, democratic Europe, through the election, in the spring of 2019 in the occasion of EP's elections, by universal direct suffrage, of an Assembly with the mandate to draft a Constitution of the Future Federal Community. This Assembly should be integrated by a delegation of representatives of the EP chosen so to respect gender and geographic balances ("*ad hoc assembly*").

Thus, the Convention provided for by article 48 of the Treaty of Lisbon would become an organism legitimized by the vote of the citizens, respecting the principle written in all European Constitutions that states that "Sovereignty belongs to the people".

Ultimately, it would be up to the governments of the Eurozone (and up to those who will decide to take part into the Eurozone), to decide together on the convocation of this Assembly, adopting a declaration ("Federal Agreement") that could have the same historic value of the one made in Messina in June 1955, although based on the vital need to lay the groundwork for a democratic community with a democratic method.

This decision should follow a political act by the Parliaments of the area reunited in assize, such as it happened in Rome in November 1990, and could assume the juridical form of the Act of September 20, 1976, that opened the way to direct universal suffrage for the election of the European Parliament, or consultative referendum such as the one that took place in Italy in June 1989, regarding a possible constituent mandate for the EP.

The assize and the decision of the governments should be prepared – in a European public space – by thematic conventions of the European citizens, as it had been proposed during Macron's presidential campaign.

The process of developing a constitution will be followed by a deliberative phase, which, we believe, will call for a popular response through a European confirmatory referendum. Moreover, a referendum is already compulsory in many member States and it's politically essential in many others, fragmenting the ratification procedures giving greater importance to national choices and debates, and putting European choices and debates in the background.

With the referendum European citizens will express themselves on the new European federal framework, on the constitutive and founding rules, and on the overcoming of the National States' dimension. If the preparatory phase will be effective, the electoral body that will be called to vote will be more conscious of its European dimension.

Pier Virgilio Dastoli, asssistant parlementaire de Altiero Spinelli (1977-1986) et Chef de la Représentation de la Commission européenne en Italie (2003-2009), est Président du Mouvement européen en Italie et professeur de droit international dans l'Université pour les étrangers "Dante Alighieri" à Reggio Calabria. Il est journaliste et Président de l' "Associazione dei Comunicatori Pubblici e Istituzionali"

Debating Europe's future ahead of the 2019 European Parliament elections - citizen participation in an open, online dialogue

By Joe Litobarski

It's fair to say that Europe faces a bumpy road ahead. The centre ground of politics is crumbling in favour of radicalism on the Left and Right; for the first time ever, the European Union will lose a Member State as Britain marches towards Brexit; relations with Russia are at their lowest ebb since the end of the Cold War; terrorist attacks sow fear and stoke hatred across the continent; authoritarianism is on the rise, and "strong men" are weakening checks and balances on power in countries both outside the EU and within it.

Yet there are opportunities as well as challenges. The Eurozone economy is finally ticking along nicely, growing by 2.5% in 2017 (even faster than the United States, which saw GDP expand by 2.3% over the same period). Economic growth in the 19-member currency bloc is nearing its highest level in a decade. Joblessness is falling, and the rate of hiring for new employees is at a 17-year high. Consumer and business confidence are at numbers undreamed of since 2001.

The election of President Emmanuel Macron in France has opened a rare window to discuss the future governance of the European Union. The EU has recovered from the initial shock of the 2016 Brexit referendum and has displayed uncharacteristic unity and discipline during the negotiations. Losing Britain as a member will be painful, but it may also be a catalyst for change; the UK is, after all, widely seen as an impediment to deeper integration.

Europe, then, needs to decide what sort of future it wants. Saturday 25 March 2017 marked the 60th anniversary since the Treaty of Rome was signed. On that day in 1957, the European Economic Community (precursor to today's European Union) came into being. Ahead of the anniversary, the European Commission published a White Paper on the Future of Europe, setting out five possible scenarios.

- **Scenario 1:** Carrying On - Nothing major changes. The EU continues tinkering around the edges, but pursues no major architectural reforms. Essentially, this is the 'status quo' option.
- **Scenario 2:** Nothing but the Single Market – A common criticism from British eurosceptics ahead of the Brexit referendum was that the European Common Market had been sold during the 1975 referendum as being primarily about trade. Over the years, it's undeniable that the scope of European integration has expanded to include more and more policy areas. Could it be stripped back to the basics?
- **Scenario 3:** Those Who Want More Do More – This is the so-called "multi-speed" model, with different EU Member States integrating at different speeds. Those who want to do more in specific areas such as defence, internal security or social matters are able to form "coalitions of the willing" to do so, excluding those countries that want to hang back (or aren't able to integrate fast enough).
- **Scenario 4:** Doing Less More Efficiently - Similar to scenario 2, this would see the number of policy areas dealt with by the European Union being trimmed. However, it would not focus solely on trade and economic matters, and might even include further integration in those areas the EU does continue to focus on.
- **Scenario 5:** Doing Much More Together – The so-called "federal option". This scenario would see a push for deeper integration across the board, with a faster and more effective decision-making structure put into place so that the EU can respond quickly to challenges.

In the Rome Declaration of March 2017, the leaders of the EU Member States (minus the British Prime Minister) and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission all seemed to favour scenario 4. They announced that they want the EU to *"be big on big issues and small on small ones."*

However, a decision this large needs public debate and deliberation to legitimise it. Regardless of which scenario was favoured by the governments of the EU-27 in March 2017, it should be the European Parliament elections of 2019 that truly decide the future direction of Europe.

Next year will represent a changing of the guard for the EU. Not only will we have the European Parliament elections, but the mandates of a raft of key EU positions are due to expire, including the President of the European Commission (who has said he will not stand for another term), the President of the European Council, and the President of the European Central Bank. The UK is also set to formally exit the European Union in early 2019. In other words: if a change of direction is coming, it will be in 2019.

Online social movements have demonstrated their ability to push for change. Some of the most disruptive moments of the last two years have been driven by mass online movements, including *En Marche!* and the election of Emmanuel Macron in France; *Momentum* and the Labour party's stunning election upset in the United Kingdom; the shock election of Donald Trump in the US, and the Leave campaign during the Brexit referendum.

The website I edit, Debating Europe, is not an online social movement itself, in that it doesn't advocate for specific policies or actions. However, ahead of the 2019 European Parliament elections, Debating Europe has been drawing on the lessons learned by successful online social movements to push for an open, online dialogue between citizens and policymakers about the future of Europe. We have a social media following of over 270,000 people from across Europe (which, to put that number into perspective, is a greater number of followers than *Momentum* in the UK or *En Marche!* in France), and that helps us reach a pan-European audience of (largely, though not exclusively) young citizens.

Our aim is to provoke a public dialogue around precisely the sort of "big ideas" that were put forward by the European Commission in its White Paper on the Future of Europe. Our flagship initiative in this respect is called "Me & EU", and is by far the most popular project we have ever run on Debating Europe.

Me & EU involves taking questions sent in from members of the public and putting them to a selection of MEPs representing the different parties and groups in the European Parliament. Each MEP is given roughly a minute to respond (ideally in video format, or else transcribed as a text response) and set out their position. Overall, the project helps expose the differences of opinion in the Parliament, giving citizens a chance to see multiple responses to their questions from across the political spectrum.

In this way, we hope we can contribute to a public, citizen-led debate with policymakers about the future direction of the EU. The topics covered in our online debates draw strongly on the suggested scenarios in the Future of Europe White Paper, and we try to make them as accessible as possible to as many people as we can.

In short: 2019 is a make-or-break year for the European project. It is vital that citizens engage with the debate on the Future of Europe, and that means making policymakers accessible, in a highly-visible way, to questions, comments, suggestions and criticism from citizens about the future direction of travel.

Joe Litobarski is the editor of Debating Europe, an online discussion platform that fosters discussion between European citizens and policymakers. Since its launch in 2011, Debating Europe has built a 3.4 million strong community of citizens and a social media following of over 270,000 people from across Europe. To date, a selection of 130,000 questions from citizens have been put to over 2,500 key policymakers and experts from across Europe.

8th European Conference on Public Communication (EuroPCom): "[Re]shaping European dialogues"

By Michele Cercone

Since 2010, the annual European Conference on Public Communication (EuroPCom) has provided a platform to showcase ideas and best practice on the latest public communication trends. The 2017 conference, entitled *[Re]shaping European dialogues*, brought together 1000 communication experts from local, regional, national and EU administrations, as well as private agencies, NGOs and academia on 9 and 10 November in Brussels.

Given the rapidly changing political, societal and technological landscape over the past few years, it has become obvious that a one-sided approach is not enough to deal with the growing distrust of institutions and the lack of citizen engagement both with and for Europe and in public affairs in general. Therefore, one of the major challenges for public communicators is to find effective ways to reverse those trends through listening, conversation and implementing the feedback received. The 2017 EuroPCom conference thus aimed to provide space to discuss and share views on fostering communication efforts to engage citizens in European affairs and examine the unique crossover between communication and engagement.

The conference was structured around three topics. The first, **EU in the communication storm**, covered key issues such as political campaigning, tackling populism and Euroscepticism, and the role of public service broadcasters in communicating Europe. The event also focused on strategies and best practice for **effective two-way communication.** Thematic sessions included discussions on how to raise emotional engagement, the role of staff ambassadors in the public and private sectors, the importance of behavioural and audience insight, a review of EU institutional communication, and the impact of participatory projects at local level. Lastly, experts and speakers shared their views on **all things digital**, for instance by addressing the latest trends in social media, data mining and machine-driven communication.

Anthony Luzzatto Gardner, (retired) US ambassador to the EU, kicked off the conference with a keynote speech delivered in the European Parliament Hemicycle. He addressed the importance of EU integration, and the need to communicate its achievements clearly to people. Mr Gardner also referred to the mutually beneficial relationship between the EU and the United States in addressing a series of shared challenges. He argued nevertheless that the EU was not communicating its achievements successfully, and recommended that it adopt a more corporate-like approach to communication: focus more on communication campaigns on social media and engage third-party validators to enhance trust. Mr Gardner concluded that messages should be sold less timidly – the EU should encourage private companies to shine a spotlight on the positive impact of EU policies.

Format and contributions

The programme of the conference was divided into two parts:

- The first part focused on more "traditional" capacity-building and learning sessions, with the following formats: **workshops**, bringing communicators together on a specific topic and presenting practical case studies; **keynote lectures** by high-level experts followed by debates with the audience; and **mini training sessions** on selected practical skills.
- The second part of the conference consisted of open-type sessions called **Ideas Labs**, which provided space for active interaction, co-creation and cooperation. The Ideas Labs were set up by participants with a participatory format geared to each lab.

The conference featured 94 speakers from 21 countries, including contributions by:

- Robby MOOK, Senior Fellow at Harvard University, and former chief of Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign, United States;
- Alex AIKEN, Executive Director for Government Communication, UK Government;
- Luc VAN DEN BRANDE, Special Adviser to the President of the European Commission on citizen outreach, and member of the European Committee of the Regions;
- Jeanette ZUIDEMA, European service, Province of Antwerp, winner of the EuroPCom 2017 award, Belgium;
- Marije VAN DEN BERG, researcher and advisor on local democracy and citizen control, Whiteboxing, The Netherlands;
- Anthony GOOCH, Communication Director, OECD;
- Stephen CLARK, Director for Relations with Citizens, DG Communication, European Parliament;

- Mikel LANDABASO ALVAREZ, Director of Strategy and Corporate Communication, DG Communication, European Commission.

Avenues for thought

Several key avenues for thought emerged from the discussions. With regard to political campaigning, speakers noted that social media have crucially changed the way political messages are delivered and how they are perceived by the public. Both the message and the messenger play a pivotal role in election communication. Strategists should thus closely monitor what people are experiencing online to frame their messages as effectively as possible.

With regard to social media, the importance of emotions and the need to tap the emotional level in communication were flagged up during several sessions. Behavioural research and analysis of audience perspectives therefore play an essential role in the public communication toolkit.

The conference looked at new advances in digital technologies, and their application for communicators. Data mining in particular, by identifying and extracting patterns or making predictions, can have a positive impact on tailoring communication strategies. Nonetheless, there are also challenges linked to big data, such as the veracity of the available data and the need for a consolidated legal framework for using those data.

The use of artificial intelligence and machine-driven communication tools such as chatbots were identified as one of the key pathways for transforming online communication. In addition to increasing the efficacy of communication and stimulating greater engagement through data-driven insight, there are challenges, for instance whether messages generated by bots can be trusted.

The conference also addressed the "Reflecting on Europe" initiative, an online platform developed by the European Committee of the Regions to engage citizens in their home regions in the ongoing discussion about the future of the EU. The discussion around the initiative highlighted the need for better civic education to allow for a better understanding of the EU. It also emphasised the fundamental role of public trust in community engagement and governance. Therefore, reflections on the future of Europe clearly need to embrace the dimension of citizens and take their perspective into account.

Follow up

Considering the overall positive feedback from the EuroPCom community on the role of the conference as an "inter-institutional laboratory of EU communication", smaller scale spin-off events – the EuroPCom series – will be held ahead of the main conference in November. The objective is to foster capacity building and cooperation among experts from EU institutions and Member States. The 2018 series will focus on fake news, disinformation and malinformation and how to address these online, partly with a view to the upcoming European elections and the possible proliferation of such activities with an EU context.

Michele Cercone is Head of the Events Unit in the Communication Directorate at the European Committee of the Regions, but has recently joined the EP on a temporary basis to help strengthen its spokesperson's services in the year leading to the European elections 2019. He previously worked as a journalist in Italy, France, the United States and Belgium and also covered EU affairs for the Italian newswire ANSA between 2000 and 2005. In 2006 he joined the European Commission's Spokesperson Service, where he worked until 2015 as Spokesperson for Transports, Spokesperson for Justice Liberty and Security and Spokesperson for Home Affairs.

EU Datathon 2017

By Luca Martinelli

The Estonian Presidency of the Council of the EU and the Publications Office co-organised a Datathon focussing on the reuse of data from the EU ODP. EU Datathon 2017 challenged teams to create applications which generate innovative services and address specific policy or societal issues in line with three priorities of the Juncker Commission: jobs, growth and investment; digital single market and democratic change.

The Datathon started in September 2017, and the final event took place on 16 November 2017 in Brussels. Three webinars were organised during which various data providers presented their datasets. The competition sparked a lot of interest: 34 teams from all over Europe submitted proposals covering a wide range of EU datasets, and the top ten teams were invited to present their app during the final event. The finalists were evaluated by a jury of data professionals from both in and outside the EU institutions, and used data from various EU sources: TED, agricultural data, CORDIS, EUR-Lex, geospatial, EFSA, JRC, energy, transparency.

C4P.io from Belgium and Greece came in first place, with its C4P Platform which gives insight into public procurement contracts in the European Union, using data from TED (OP) and the Financial Transparency System (DG BUDG). They were invited to the European Big Data Value Forum in Versailles, 21-22 November 2017, where they were able to present their product. LightOnEurope, a team from Germany, came in second for its open source app helping enterprises and citizens to compare data (e.g. population, environment, transport connections). Unigraph, a team from Austria (AT) ranked third with an app organising data sources and facilitating searches from CORDIS, the Transparency Register and Wikidata.

Due to its success, the Datathon will be repeated this year. The OP will also follow-up bilaterally with C4P.io and Unigraph, because of their direct connection to TED, CORDIS and the Metadata registry. Further information about the finalists, the speakers and all the videos and photos of the final event are on the EU Datathon 2017 website (https://publications.europa.eu/en/web/datathon2017)

Luca Martinelli - Assistant to the Director General of the Publications Office of the European Union

After completing his PhD in Political Science in the University of Florence in 1995, Dr Martinelli undertook research at the University of Bologna (Centre for Public Policy Analysis in the Department of Organization and Political System), on projects related to public administration and public policy analysis. In 1997 he joined the European Commission, working first in Public Health Policy and then (since 2001) in Information Society and Media. He then worked as Policy Officer for Digital Libraries, Open Data, and Public Sector Information within the Information Society and Media Directorate General, before taking up his current role as the Assistant to the Director General of the Publications Office of the European Union in late 2012. Dr Martinelli is Policy Fellow Alum at the Centre for Science and Policy, University of Cambridge.

At the Publications Office (OP), he has been recently following the development of the Strategic Objectives 2017-2025, the new strategic framework approved by the interinstitutional management board of the OP. One of the 10 objectives foresees that the OP becomes the central point of access to and reuse of public sector information and open data from EU institutions, thus contributing to the creation of innovative products and services by businesses.

SEECOM – South East Europe Government Communication Conference 2017

"Public Dialogue in Europe: Reconnecting the EU with its citizens and neighbourhood" – Conclusions "Berlin, 13-14 October 2017"

Challenges

Although the European Union is by far the largest contributor of development assistance in South East Europe, the public perception in certain enlargement countries is that some third countries contribute more. Furthermore, the visibility and public credit that the European Union receives in the enlargement region is not in proportion to the volume of the EU's investment.

The level of public support for enlargement in the EU Member States remains disturbingly low, which highlights the pressing need for more coordinated action to explain to European citizens the importance of the EU enlargement policy, as a sustained effort to spread peace, prosperity and democracy throughout the European continent.

In an increasingly challenging environment of disinformation, European governments are struggling to engage citizens in a dialogue on a united Europe. This challenge is also present in South East Europe, where third parties are working systematically to offer alternative narratives, values and perspectives to the citizens of the region.

Although propaganda and disinformation existed before, the new geopolitical circumstances, the advance of information technology and the fundamentally changed media landscape have made those challenges much more impactful and much more difficult to discern.

Regardless of the mounting evidence of the clear means and clear targets of the ongoing anti-European communications efforts, there doesn't seem to be a common understanding in South East Europe, and Europe as a whole, of the presence, extent and perils of this new form of information warfare.

Opportunities

The latest State of the Union Speech by President Juncker has provided a powerful boost to the enlargement process and the much needed encouragement for quicker reforms in the accession countries, offering for the first time in many years a timeframe for enlargement.

With the recent election victories of pro-European forces in a number of key EU Member States, the mainstream of European politics is clearly shifting in favour of a common European future. This creates a favourable political environment to rekindle public enthusiasm for a united Europe through effective public communications.

Reputation, credibility and public trust are pivotal for the ability of governments and public institutions to counter disinformation by effective communications. The reputation and credibility of the European project is best earned by showing the added value of the EU on the ground in local communities. The very tangible benefits of the Berlin Process, as an effort to reconnect Europe's South East with the rest of the continent, in terms of transport, energy and trade, as well as

to boost regional ties, youth and civil society exchange, represents a major communication asset to this end.

Although the pandemic problem of credibility of both traditional and new media and the surge of fake news and disinformation raises a serious communication challenge, it also represents an opportunity for governments to re-establish themselves as trusted sources of public information, especially through direct communication with citizens. This, however, requires adherence to the highest ethical and professional standards of government communications.

Ways forward

There is no quick fix to anti-European propaganda, fake news or disinformation. Instead, sustained and coordinated actions by EU Member States, enlargement countries and EU institutions are required in order to build the resilience of European societies, through a combination of political messaging, engagement with local communities and civic education efforts.

However, in order to reconnect the EU with its citizens and neighbourhood, political messaging at EU and national levels will not suffice. Instead, effective communication requires sustained dialogues at local level and active engagement with local communities, civil society and businesses in explaining how and why a united Europe matters.

The focus of any strategic communications effort should be on people and the specific issues that they care about, rather than on institutional agendas, because people follow issues, not institutions. Opening a meaningful dialogue with a specific community on an EU-related issue that matters to them is a major step in making them care for and support the idea of a united Europe. Fostering professionalism and freedom of the media as a key partner for this dialogue is of paramount importance.

Government communications should focus more on the added value, visible results and concrete benefits that a united Europe holds for citizens, to which end the Berlin Process offers extremely valuable assets. Furthermore, developing service-oriented communication which centres on the provision of useful and reliable information about public services and enables citizens' feedback, serves to build public trust in government policies.

Communications on Europe need to be able to capture people's attention and engage them over specific issues. Involving citizens and communities more directly in the programming of the EU's financial assistance to the enlargement countries would raise more public awareness and underscore the relevance of the EU integration process. In this context, integrating communications into the programming process for pre-accession financial assistance by the European Commission is highly commendable, as well as exploring options to increase governments' capacity to communicate about the EU in the region.

This conference was organised in partnership with the Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations (DG NEAR) of the European Commission.

The next SEECOM annual Conference will take place in Sarajevo on 12-13 October 2018.

Echoes from the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC, USA) - Work in Progress

Agenda of the 2018 Communications School Week, 19-21 June, Fort Myers, Florida [1]

- **Workshops**
  - * Accreditation in Public Relations (APR)
  - * Developing Communications Plans
  - * Using Social Media for Branding and Marketing
- **Plenary sessions**
  - * Using Social Media During A Crisis: the Hurricane Irma Story
  - * Identifying and Addressing Communication Complexities (Why What You Say May Not Be What Your Audience Hears)
  - * From Chaos to Collaboration: Changing the Way We Communicate With the Public
  - * Local Media Panel
- **Breakout sessions**
  - * Executive Presence: Communication Techniques for Executives
  - * Planning for Disaster: A Crash Course in Crisis Communications
  - * Twelve Ways to Improve Your Writing
  - * Best Practices for Engaging with Media in Good and Bad Times
  - * Making Portals Great Again
  - * How to Save Your Social Media Plan
  - * The Art of Good Science Communication: Be Bold, Speak Clearly
  - * State of Rebranding: Modernizing Your State's Brand Identity
  - * Employee Engagement at USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service
  - * Break Out of Your Cultural Comfort Zone to Communicate Globally
  - * Managing the Rumor Mill (citizen journalism, citizen engagement, social media campaigns)
  - * Using Nextdoor for Public Agencies
  - * "The Kentucky READ Poster Project": Influencing Hearts and Opinions
  - * How to Get Booked on the Speaker's Circuit (speaking engagement and use of social media)
  - * Science Communication in the Digital Age
  - * Social Media, E-mail Marketing, and Website Content: Developing and Measuring Integrated Multi-Platform Messaging
- **Blue Pencil & Gold Screen Awards and Communicator of the Year**

An outcome of the event will be published in the next edition of Convergences.

1 https://nagc.com/full-agenda-2018/

2017 Communications School Week, 13-15 June, St Louis, Missouri

Reimaging the Arch: Working with Multiple Agencies to Communicate a Monumental Transformation

By Maria Mazzone and Gwendolyn Green

The introductory key-note was delivered by **Ryan McClure**, Communications Director, City Arch River Foundation. The City Arch River Project is a $380 million public-private renovation of the Gateway Arch grounds and surrounding areas. This undertaking is the biggest private investment in public lands since the renovation of the Statue of Liberty.

The presentation focused on how to effectively communicate a complex project to the public while working in a partnership with multiple agencies and organizations. The City Arch River Project involves federal, state, local, and private organizations all working together to transform the Gateway Arch experience.

Ryan began his presentation at the beginning, with the 1963 –1965 design and construction of the 630 feet St. Louis Arch.

His presentation painted a clear chronologically of changes to the areas surrounding the Arch. The St. Louis landscape has been transformed as a result of the Riverfront, Parks, 8-Lane Highway Land Bridge, Courthouse and Arch renovations.

The St. Louis Arch is known as the Gateway to the West and is a source of great pride for the city and its residents. For this reason, engagement from a wide range of audiences was essential to ensure the voice of the city, community, merchants, local, state, and federal agencies was considered and incorporated in the design, and implementation of the project. It was a multifaceted interagency communication and collaboration approach (e.g., workgroup, multimedia, private foundation, long term planning) largely attributed to the success of this long term project.

For your information, access the live cam real time and archived footage of construction during various phases in the project's development. http://www.earthcam.net/projects/cityarchriver/?cam=hyatt

Using the Media to Communicate in a Crisis - Case Study: The Gatlinburg Fires

November 2016– A massive firestorm burned 18,000 acres, damaged or destroyed 2,500 structures and killed 14 people. Infrastructure was unusable. There was no power or internet service, and very limited cell service. The only option was to use the news media's satellite trucks to get information out to residents.

Media want to hear "the leader-" Identify a core group of spokespeople who do well on camera. All info will come only from these people. This helps control rumors and keep media on your message.

Brief on a schedule– Time briefings to meet newscast production deadlines. Plan and tightly control media tour coverage. (Only business could be shown on camera, no homes!) Security is an issue, check press credentials.

Understand crisis news cycle- 1st Outpouring of sympathy, 2nd Who is to blame? Anticipate this shift, ensure spokespeople are ready to handle this change.

Take care of local affiliates- Big news organizations parachute in during a crisis and leave quickly. Ensure you're taking care of the local news media first. Your community relies on them year round.

Document everything- Take notes in real time. (You won't remember it all!) Everything is releasable under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), including texts. Expect litigation and retain all documents.

Be prepared- Build relationships before a crisis. Know who your community leaders are. Have a crisis communications plan, but expect to adapt it.

7 Ways to Explain Complex Ideas to the General Public

U.S. Department of Transportation attempts to introduce and promote, "Connected Vehicles: A new technology". Connected Vehicle program works with state and local transportation agencies, vehicle and device makers, and the public to test and evaluate technology that will enable cars, buses, trucks, trains, roads and other infrastructure, and our smartphones and other devices to "talk" to one another. To learn more, https://www.its.dot.gov/cv_basics/cv_basics_what.htm

7 Rules ...

1. Know Your Audience
2. Why Does It Matter
3. Get Connected, Microsite
4. Use Multimedia to Message (i.e., Infographics, Images and Video)
5. Develop Storyboards
6. Know What to Leave Out
7. Anticipate their Questions

Plain & Simple: Plain Language Techniques and Concepts for Government Communicators

- Plain language is not playful, folksy or "dumbed down."
- Plain language is reader focused. What does the reader need to know? State it clearly.
- Use the Reverse Pyramid– State your point FIRST. This isn't a college essay.
- Design documents for easy reading. Use headings and subheadings to break up text. Use white space to direct the eye of the reader.
- Every readers 1st question– How soon can I stop reading? You have 3 seconds to capture your reader!

Reaching Your Next Summit: Seven Vertical Lessons and One Essential Question for Leading with Impact

Manley Feinberg is an award winning international keynote speaker, business leader (former CEO, Build A Bear Workshop Co.), and author of "Reaching Your Next Summit". Using his experiences as a mountain climber as his backdrop, Manley inspired and motivated NAGC conference attendees by highlighting his leadership experiences and compelling lessons from his adventures in his latest book, "Seven Vertical Lessons and One Essential Question for Leading with Impact."

1. Courage is Contagious—be bold and dare to try something different. Face your fear.
2. Declare Your Current Climb—speak your goal and declare your challenge. Put your goal in your face, on your computer, bathroom mirror, car dashboard.
3. Get on Belay. "*Be Lay*" means climber's rope; "Belayer" someone that holds your rope. The belayer supports and helps, giving enough rope so they don't hold the climber back but not so much that the climber falls too far when they slip. Make sure you are on belay and you are the belayer for someone else.
4. Start Challenging Beliefs and you will get momentum. Ask yourself, why are you doing things the same way? Try something different. Do something different.
5. Ask the Right Questions. Don't blow off the basics. Do the work and don't take the basics for granted.
6. Anchor Your Actions and Accountabilities. What are the essentials items that your team depends upon? Are you ready?
7. Celebrate the Summits. Relish in the moment and enjoy your victories.
8. What Legacy Will You Leave? Identify the "take away" and lessons learned.

Manley gave a truly motivating and inspiring message. With poise, Manley, moved from receiving applause at the podium to book signing, as participants hectically navigated to their breakout session. From keynote presenter to book author, he was the professional. Even as he autographed each book, he continued in his role as a belayer. Manley listened, talked and encouraged the conference attendees. Even in the craze, he offered career guidance to attendees as they declared their climb—to be a national speaker. Manley even made time for a photo op with conference attendees. Even one with me.

Uprising: A City Divided

In the wake of an officer involved shooting, the city of Charlotte, NC was thrust into the national spotlight after the unexpected and unanticipated uprising of the civil unrest. The dramatic events of September 20-24, 2016 left one dead, several injured, hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage, and a city divided until the release of the information exposing the facts and truth of the police investigation were reluctantly released. **Mark Basnight, Sr. Public Affairs Training Specialist, Argonne National Laboratory, Public Affairs Academy** shares with conference attendees this extraordinary situation and the lessons learned that might be critical to other government communicators in the future.

In one year, Charlotte NC experienced 8 police officer involved shootings. The Charlotte NC Police Department is comprised majority of African-Americans in a city comprised of 35% African Americans. With a new police chief and a mayor faced with reelection, the city's leadership failed to recognize and timely address the growing community unrest following each shooting incident.

On September 20, 2016 an African American man was shot by Charlotte Police, while a family member videotaped the incident. The family accused the Charlotte Police Department of killing an unarmed man. The family of the deceased and the community demanded that the police release the police officer's body cam footage of the incident. The family used social media to bring public attention to the incident which began civil unrest and 3 days of protest. The Police Chief and the Mayor's Office failed to get ahead of the social media activity or local and national news coverage with their official and coordinated communication message. At no time were the Police and City officials televised together. They were not represented and ad-

vised by trained communications specialist or spokesperson for the city; nor, the city leadership equipped with emergency plans and protocols to follow for public containment and continuity of message. Eventually, the police video was released and revealed that the deceased did possess and draw a firearm. The police officer was justified in his response to the threat. Unfortunately, the damage was done and there were lessons to be learned.

Lessons Learned:

1. Understand who you are and how you are seen by your community/audience?
2. Know your community opinion leaders.
3. Stay connected and engaged. Keep a seat at the community table.
4. Be transparent. Disclose information, if you can.
5. Recognize, address and respond timely to your audience and/or community.
6. Develop a clearly defined message.
7. Respond with a unified voice and a central message.
8. Resolve or reduce tension as quickly as possible.

The Internet is Magic (And Other Crazy Things We Believe About It)

B.J. Mendelson, author of *Social Media is Bullshit*, believes we buy into the myth that the internet is magic because we want quick solutions. But, it isn't magic, it's just a tool. It takes effort, planning and strategic partnerships to make something go viral.

Go back to the basics:

1. Talk to your constituents.
2. Have a clearly defined goal for your use of Social Media.
3. Be where your audience is.
4. Have a great visual and a compelling story.
5. Use offline network to push social story.

"Get your offline shit together first... The tail doesn't wag the dog". B.J. Mendelson

Maria Mazzone

Maria Mazzone has worked for the United States federal government in a variety of communications roles for over 17 years. Ms. Mazzone has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and International Relations. She served as a student intern in the Irish parliament in 1998 when the Good Friday Agreement, the peace accord between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, was signed.

Gwendolyn Green

Gwendolyn Green has been a Health Communications Specialist with the United States Human Services, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services for approximately 9 years. She possesses a M.S. degree in Marketing Management, and a B.S. in Health Sciences. Gwendolyn has worked for local, state, federal government agencies much of her career promoting health programs and services through community outreach and education.

CLUB OF VENICE

Provisional programme 2018-2020

2018
Luxembourg, 8-9 March 2018 Thematic seminar
Vilnius, 7-8 June 2018 Plenary meeting
Greece, autumn 2018 (tbc) Seminar on migration
Venice, 22-23 November 2018 Plenary meeting
London, December 2018 (tbc) StratCom Seminar
2019
(venue to be defined), early spring 2019 Thematic seminar
Bucharest (tbc), June 2019 Plenary meeting
(venue to be defined), autumn 2019 Thematic seminar
Venice, November 2019 Plenary meeting
2020
(venue to be defined), early spring 2020 Thematic seminar
Croatia (venue to be defined), May or June 2020 Plenary meeting
(venue to be defined), autumn 2020 Thematic seminar
Venice, November 2020 Plenary meeting

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